

50

IN DEFENCE OF JUSTICE AND PEACE

(Legitimate Issues and
Queries: on the current
attempts for a "settlement"
in the Middle East).

ATH-THAWRA
PUBLICATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

This book is a compilation of a series of articles run in "ath-Thawra" daily -organ of the Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party that leads the revolutionary power in Iraq - in November, 1973, that is, in the wake of the latest fight that erupted over the occupied Arab territories on October 6, 1973. It is essentially an elaboration of an argument first published in "ath-Thawra" in February 1973 and reproduced a month later in a book entitled: "What is Happening in the Area? and Whither?"

As such, perhaps this book can best be introduced by a glimpse at its predecessor, which was indeed a timely warning against erroneous, rather conspiratorial in certain cases, official Arab policies .

"What is Happening in the Area? and Whither?" exposed inclinations to a "settlement", based on Security Council Resolution No. 242 of November, 1967, through inflaming a resounding limited war - large scale but brief - to serve a dual purpose of "activating" the stagnant "political solution" and winning a strong bargaining position during the negotiations with the enemy.

In addition to elucidating the dangerousness and futility of those inclinations, it expounded our concept of a brave and resolute fight for liberation - against the imperialist-Zionist alliance - that will eventually end in victory, irrespective of the time, energy and sacrifices it would entail.

We named the intended limited war: "The Rattle of Arms" to become better known amongst some political and journalistic circles as: "The War of Activation".

That we foretold the short-lived fighting that broke out recently in the Arab region together with the current trend of events was neither divination nor fortune-telling. It was the simple and logical outcome of a realistic scientific analysis and a meticulous calculation of living realities and authentic information that took into full consideration the history of the Arab nation and the experiences of other peoples who fought manly for true liberation as well as the exigencies of the international situation.

Opening our examination of those inclinations to a settlement, we called attention to the suspicious activities taking place in the Arab region and cautioned against imminent dangerous happenings. At the beginning of "What is Happening in the Area? and Whither?", we said :

"The (Arab) region is now the scene of strange happenings: simultaneously covert and overt, unequivocal and ambiguous, direct and indirect activities and manoeuvres; conflicting statements and declarations; and turbulent waves of speculations and expectations. They are all evidence that grave matters are being concocted and that grave events are about to occur tomorrow, or the day after".

In quest of a credible interpretation of that extraordinary state of affairs ,we highlighted the impact of two new crucial factors :

The first was that the end of the Vietnamese war had rendered the Arab region the indisputedly most intense and most complex area of the world in addition to freeing the hands of America for more aggression and increased backing up to the Zionist entity.

The second was that the suffocating crisis, one of the longest and most trying nightmares ever sustained by the Arab nation, has exhausted the patience of the Arab masses and kindled their resentment and alarm of false pledges , thus creating a situation threatening with explosion in the absence of an immediate and clear saving decision.

With regards to the options for an outlet, we said:

“As things now stand, there are only two alternatives: either to fight against the enemy and win a complete or a partial victory or to admit the aggression and compromise with the invader

“But, because these two alternatives are entirely divergent and contradictory, attempts were made in the past, and still continue, to devise a formula bringing them to a concord: a petty fight or a pretension of fight coupled with a search for some sort of a settlement that is primarily an admittance of the aggression and a capitulation”.

We pointed out the domestic pressures and the local and foreign temptations facing the Arab regimes seeking a “settlement” and refuted their pretexts and justifications, including the falsehood saying that the Soviet-American

“accord” had ruled out any possibility for a confrontation between those affiliated to the two super-powers.

We particularly warned against the dangerousness of counting on a purely military action that would amount to nothing but a “Rattle of Arms”, because it was cut off from other indispensable factors such as: the liberation of the economy, which is considered as decisive as the military factor; the release of the arrested overwhelming energies of the Arab masses; the consolidation of the Palestinian Resistance Movement that suffered savage successive massacres and that is threatened with attempts for “taming” and containment .

Reminding of former fruitless efforts, we portrayed the vision of the Arab regimes in question in these words:

“It is evident that the advocates of the “settlement” have come to realize that neither the “political solution” nor “changing the present stance of America and Western Europe” can be attained through envoys and exchanged notes and that other ways and means must be found out”.... Therefore they imagined :

“When ‘The Rattle of Arms’ grows louder, the ice shrowding the crisis will melt and everybody will have to get moving towards new positions...

“In such a case there shall be no need to bring the economic factor into action because such ‘Rattle of Arms’ is primarily required as a brief one and its expected results would require closer ties with America and a greater “enjoyment” of its goods and loans”.

In the light of the organic connection between imper-

ialism and the Zionist movement, we examined the hopes that Western Europe and America would exert enough pressure to make "Israel" withdraw from the Arab lands occupied in June 1967.

Admitting the favourable but indecisive changes that continue to take place in Western Europe together with the tendency of some West European capitals to act independently from the will of Washington, we explained how the sheer "Rattle of Arms" would not turn those dreams into realities. We underlined that Western Europe, for obvious interests, would not end its support to the aggressor and align itself with the just Arab cause unless it was compelled to do so through a determined fight covering all the dimensions of a real battle for liberation.

As to America, we explained how its indispensable vital interests in the extremely strategic Arab region compel it to stick to its present attitude and to double its support to the Zionist entity, which is virtually an aggressive military base obediently standing guard upon American interests and fiercely serving as a deterrent to prevent the liberation, unity and progress of the Arab nation. An America that is happy with the perpetuation of the occupation will not change its mind unless it is forced to do so, we argued. By way of evidence, we said:

"Excluding some exceptions, the general results of the aggression committed by the Zionist entity on June 5, 1967 were completely in the interest of American imperialism. From this it follows that the maintenance of this aggression does not constitute, as far as the official

Arab "front" is concerned, any menace to American interests and designs. It rather enhances them..

"Prior to the aggression, America enjoyed the largest and most serious imperialist interests in the region. After more than five and a half years from the aggression, we find these interests flourishing and expanding even inside the countries that suffered the aggression..

"...America will neither 'retreat' from its present stand nor will it 'compel' the Zionist enemy to withdraw in accordance with the Security Council's resolution unless it is, itself, 'forced' to do so, or otherwise rewarded for doing so by better 'gains' than those it is now reaping because of its support to the Zionist aggression".

Exposing the trap set by America and Arab reaction for the regimes anxious for a settlement we wrote:

"American imperialism is now paying feverish efforts - using all possible direct and indirect ways and means - to tempt Arab regimes lay down arms and give up all resistance and to support its looming settlement deluding them that it (the settlement) represented their sole outlet of their strangulating crisis".

"What sort of a settlement can the present policies, including 'The Rattle of Arms', of most Arab regimes yield?", we wondered.

Here is our answer that summarised the conclusions we arrived at regarding the logical outcome of a sheer 'Rattle of Arms' destined to be of a short duration and limited

compromising objectives:

“...The path followed by most official Arab quarters - whether consciously or unconsciously - is that of striving to re-arrange the affairs of the Arab region in a manner ensuring American interests and freeing them from the need for Zionist occupation of Arab lands. This is the essence of the expected ‘settlement’ and this is the cornerstone of American policy in the area stretching from the eastern shores of the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean”.

To forestall dangerous tendencies to a “settlement” that is primarily a capitulation, we presented a comprehensive programme for breaking the deadlock and advancing for the liberation of all Arab lands occupied before and after June 1967. That programme, which provided for using all available Arab weapons - military, political and oil - was based on previous proposals tendered by Iraq to the other Arab states, particularly the Iraqi proposals to the Collective Arab Defence Council held in October 1972.

Needless to say that we showed how the Arab revolution, despite all set-backs, is daily gaining strength and confidence and clinging to its stubborn determination for the restoration of all Arab legitimate rights, however costly that might be.

In this book, we pose “Legitimate Issues and Queries” about what has come to pass in October, 1973 reminding that we had foretold it, warned against it and did our best to forestall it. While doing so we are sure that the “settlement” intended to be reached under the rattle of arms

is impossibly difficult because it is unreasonable and unjust and because the new realities brought about by the last fight gave the Arab nation, with its vanguard revolutionary and progressive forces, sufficient strength and determination to continue its victorious march towards liberation, unity and progress .

More than six trying years after the June 1967 aggression which resulted in the occupation of some Egyptian and Syrian territories together with the remainder of the Palestinian land that had been annexed to the Kingdom of Jordan, the Egyptian and Syrian governments waged, on October 6, 1973, a large scale war on the Zionist enemy under the slogan of: "The Liberation of the Occupied Land".

On October 22, 1973, the Security Council adopted, on a joint Soviet-American initiative, a resolution calling for a cease-fire by all belligerent parties and for the implementation of Security Council Resolution No. 242 of 1967 under guarantees from the two super-powers and from the United Nations (UN) and the Security Council.

The Egyptian government accepted the Council's resolution of October 22, 1973 at once, as it had accepted the previous resolution in 1967; and the Syrian government accepted the last resolution, which is fundamentally based on Security Council Resolution No. 242, two days after its adoption, i.e., on October, 24.

The Arab masses, our brothers in the Egyptian and Syrian governments and our friends the world over know our opinion on Security Council Resolution No. 242 as well as our views on the Council's last resolution, which we rejected for reasons explained in an official statement. They also know, in detail, our viewpoint concerning the imperialist-Zionist aggression committed before and

after June, 1967, and the ways and means for encountering it. This is because we have expounded our views and stands through various media on all occasions. Therefore, we shall not re-iterate them here. We would rather exert a great effort to tackle some issues, which we consider as basic, from angles which, in our opinion, are unanimously agreed upon and regarded as both normal and realistic.

The non-controversial angles from which we will try to approach the matters at issue are: "patriotism", "Arab solidarity" and "the realistic appraisal of both the Arab and the international conditions."

Nobody questions the seriousness of the June 1967 aggression and the impact of its consequences on the conditions of the countries directly affected by it, on the Arab homeland and the entire region and on certain important international conditions and issues. Nor does anyone question the right of the governments that were the direct victims of the aggression to try to remove the effects of this aggression, choosing whatever methods they consider fit. Likewise, we do not intend to deny that international organizations and major powers will necessarily have their own views, roles and pressures on the current conflict of the region. But, along with all this, there are two main points which can not at all be ignored:

1. Grave as it is, the June 1967 aggression is not the root of the dangerous conflict now flaming in the Arab region. The origin of this highly complicated and explosive conflict is the imperialist-backed Zionist usurpation of a part of the Arab territory in Palestine and the founding

thereon of an expansionist settler-colonialist entity that is organically connected with imperialist covets in the area and that constitutes a serious barrier in the face of the region's liberation, unity and progress. The Arab nation defied the Zionist usurpation and refused to yield to it and the liberation and progressive forces of the nation kept struggling against it in various forms and levels. Though marked with very big proportions and very serious dimensions, the June 1967 aggression is but a sequel of the original conflict.

Therefore, we believe that any attempt to remedy or settle the consequences of the June 1967 aggression (without a fair and comprehensive remedy of the original conflict from which this aggression stemmed) will not lead to the settlement of what is called "the problem of the area". Accordingly, whatever the efforts that might be exerted, the guarantees given and the forces committed to the arena, such an attempt will never assure what the parties involved in the search for a settlement call "just and durable peace in the region". Far from it, the region will remain exposed to future explosion and collision, regardless of whether this will erupt sooner or later .

2 . The recognition of the right of the governments of the Arab countries directly affected by the June aggression to seek the restoration of their usurped territories by the means they deem fit poses the following questions :

- a) Any patriotic government whose territory falls under foreign occupation is required to work for ending such an occupation without relinquishing

any part of its national territory, irrespective of the strategic or economic value of such a part. The preservation of national territorial integrity has always been one of the most precious values of mankind. Perhaps we are not departing from the truth if we say that any government that consents to relinquish any part of its land forfeits many of the requisites of patriotism. It is only natural that the people concerned will refuse such an action and will rise, sooner or later, against all agreement legalising it. It is also equally natural that the countries that are in kindred relations with this people, together with the political and nationalistic forces who sympathize with the cause of this people, will inevitably have certain views and stands on the matter .

- b) Considerations of Arab solidarity dictate that the governments, whose territories came under Zionist occupation in 1967, should seek complete withdrawal of the aggressor and should not agree to free their land at the expense of the continuation of the occupation of any part of the land of any other country. This is specially so in view of the fact that all these governments had fought together, under one command, in 1967, while two of them fought together, under a single command, in 1973. Again, we are not departing from the truth when we state that any injustice inflicted by the settlement on any of the countries that suffered aggression is bound to provoke disputes and problems among the governments concerned.

Such an injustice is also bound to stir up disputes and problems throughout the region in view of the issues that will necessarily arise and that the other countries of the region, being sisterly countries themselves, can not possibly ignore because they are obliged to take up the appropriate stands towards them.

Should any of the passive probabilities referred to in a) and b) above materialize, any realistic analysis, based on the record of mankind and the history of the region in particular, will show that any settlement will stand no chance of durability and will always lack the basic and conventionally known requisites of a durable peace based on justice. This is quite apart from divergences in theories and assessments of this kind of peace or the other.

Another point of cardinal importance from both the national and realistic aspects is this : granting that the Arab governments, whose territories came under occupation in June, 1967, are entitled to seek, by any ways and means they deem fit, the removal of that occupation, they have, to our mind, no right to agree to extend recognition to the Zionist entity as part of the solution or settlement leading to the removal of the aggression or as part of the price demanded for this .

Extending recognition to the Zionist entity means recognizing the Zionist usurpation of a part of the Arab land, namely, Palestine. This is something that lies well outside the rights and mandate of any Arab government, whether from the angle of territorial sovereignty or from

the angle of Arab solidarity, let alone the angle of nationalism. Such a recognition can in no way be justified, irrespective of the part played by the government that ventures it in the last war or in the previous encounters with the Zionist entity .

From an Arab legal viewpoint, the Zionist entity is not a mere "hostile state" that can be recognized and with whom certain types of relations can be established after ending or changing the hostile relations, as had happened in the past between ourselves and both of France and England and as what is normally taking place between all states around the world.

Rather, the Zionist entity is an invading structure imposed on the Arabs and trans-planted in a part of their homeland by the force of arms, thus rendering the Arab people of that land - the Palestinians - homeless. As such, the natural stand of the Arabs is not to recognize this entity . Apart from this, Arab governments or forces have the right to decide whether they intend to fight against it or not. This matter is entirely in their hands and they bear its responsibility.

To extend recognition to the Zionist entity, on any small or large area of the Arab lands, from a point of principle and from the point of future repercussions, is not different from recognizing the Zionist occupation of other Arab lands, including the territory it is now occupying.

Though this will lead to some expatriation, perhaps we do well if we elaborate this point . In the fifties,

France was occupying Algeria and claiming that it was part of the French land. In 1956, France, Britain and the Zionist entity jointly committed an aggression against Egypt and occupied a part of the Egyptian land.

The question now to be asked is this : Had France, together with any group of countries, insisted that it would not withdraw from the then occupied Egyptian territory unless Egypt and the Arabs admitted the belonging of Algeria to France, would Egypt and any group of the Arab states have agreed to that condition? Of course not. The French occupation of Egyptian land was an act of aggression which Egypt, together with her Arab brothers and her friends the world over, were entitled to end, along with the British and the Zionist occupation, with whatever means they saw fit. But they were not entitled to recognize the French usurpation of Algeria and the alienation of the Algerian national reality in exchange for the withdrawal of France .

By analogy, we must come to the conclusion that no Arab government, has the right to concede the Zionist withdrawal from the Egyptian, Syrian and - technically speaking - Jordanian lands in exchange for recognition to the Zionist entity .

We should like to emphasize, once more, that these words spring out of full respect to the freedom of every government to choose whatever ways and means it deems fit for remedying its domestic problems and to the undisputed considerations of Arab solidarity.

With this appreciation, we do not intend to question

the sisterly Arab governments regarding what they are now seeking. This has another time and another logic. But, we only wish to present to them, with all caution, this question : What are the limits and scopes at which their present efforts will stop? If these limits are within their national rights and mandate and within the scope and exigencies of patriotism and Arab solidarity, we can not but wish them all the best.

But what if these efforts exceeded the above limits and touched upon a major national issue, namely, the recognition or otherwise of the occupation of the Zionists of a large or a small part of the Arab land? What if some Arab land in one Arab country or another were ceded in addition to the ceding of a part of the land of Arab Palestine?

Quite a number of official Arab quarters might agree with our contention that they have neither the right nor the mandate to cede any part of the Palestinian Arab land. Basing themselves on the logic of national sovereignty and mandate and that of Arab solidarity which we adopted as the basis and source of our argument, they might just as well say (and they have actually said): The rights of the people of Palestine concern the Palestinians alone. If you want their opinion, just go and ask them .

Without provoking any equivocation, we take the liberty to make this casual comment, trusting that it will not be harmful to any one :

Since 1948, most Arab governments neither remembered the people of Palestine and their cause and rights nor did they call for taking their opinion except in one of two cases only. The first is gaining their support for a certain stance; and the second is for exploiting the consultation as an excuse for surrendering some of the Palestinian rights. The latter case usually takes place after securing

the consent of some Palestinian circles.

But, when they hold an opinion contrary to that of Arab governments, ... when they try to hue their own road for the restoration of the their usurped rights through their own ways and means, the Palestinian people reap nothing but disaster . Then Arab brothers do not rush to consult the Palestinians; they dash to crush them and silence their voice with clubs and rifles. Perhaps there is no need to cite examples. After all, it is just a passing comment .

It is not our intention to deny that these affairs are the concern of the people of Palestine. We only want to know how we can safely arrive at their opinion regarding this matter .

1. Contrary to the case of other people whose land fell under foreign occupation, the people of Palestine have no government to represent them and speak in their name . Raising this point should not imply that we advocate, or encourage, the creation of such a state. We only mention this for the sake of clarification and for reaching a correct answer to the question posed .
2. Consulting a people on a major issue, such as this one, comes under what is commonly known as “ the right to self-determination ”. It is common knowledge that peoples determine their future on their own lands. History tells us of no people, expelled from their land by force, who had managed to exercise their right to self-

determination in exile. How could the people of Palestine freely exercise their right to self-determination while their greater part is under the control of those who usurped their land by the force of arms and while the majority of their rest is living in countries whose governments (as judged by the rationale of their acceptance of the resolutions of the Security Council) want the outcome to be nothing but a decision for either remaining outside their land or ceding part of this land?

There are various conventional ways for exercising self-determination including, for instance, referendum. But, can a plebiscite be held among the Palestinian people now residing in the land now occupied by the Zionists (which is practically their entire land) to know if they freely want to relinquish all, or part, of this land to the Zionists ? Can a plebiscite be conducted among the Palestinians now residing in Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and other countries ? Supposing a plebiscite (if ever carried out) reveals that the Palestinian people do not want to cede any part of their land, one can not but ask: what will be the position of the governments that accepted the resolution of the Security Council and that of the parties which adhere to the resolution and seek its implementation?

3. Many quarters might sarcastically shake their

heads because of the naive character of our queries. Some of them might well say: But you have the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the other Palestinian resistance organizations who represent the people of Palestine. Therefore, there is no need for a referendum. Just go and get their opinion.

We do not want to question this point too. On the contrary; our attitude towards the resistance organizations and the Palestinian Liberation Organization is well known, and need not be expounded any more. But, following this logic, we only wish to remind of some aspects, which we deem essential:

How did the Palestinian resistance organizations and the Palestinian Liberation Organization deserve the capacity of being the legitimate representative of the people of Palestine?

In our opinion, these militant institutions, both membership and leadership, deserved this capacity, as well as the sympathy and support of the Arab masses, because they adamantly refused, from a point of principle, to surrender any part of the Palestinian territory; and because, relying on armed struggle and self-sacrifice, they kept fighting for the recovery of the Palestinian land.

This is quite natural. The true representatives of any people whose rights have been plundered and who have been driven out of their home by the force of arms and terror are none but the leaders and institutions that

valiantly lead them along the road for restoring their usurped right and for returning .

But, is it possible for institutions and leaderships, which acquired the capacity of representing their people in the way mentioned, to retain this status if they decided (and this is a mere supposition for elucidation only) to relinquish any part of their land (regardless of whether this part is large or small) and to do so before liberating one inch of that usurped land and setting foot thereon?

The supposition (we emphasize again that it is a sheer supposition) that the Palestinian Liberation Organization and the other Palestinian resistance organizations agreed, at any of the stages of the so-called "settlement", to extend recognition to the Zionist entity (which means agreement to cede some part of the Palestinian national land) raises, in our opinion, two questions :

- 1 . The conclusions previously stated on the mandate of governments regarding the tackling of the question of occupied national land are also applicable to the supposed consent of the Palestinian resistance organizations for recognizing the Zionist entity . The gist of those conclusions is : Any government that consents to relinquish any part of its land forfeits many of the requisites of patriotism ; and it is natural that the people concerned will revolt against this action sooner or later and that their brothers and friends will take the appropriate stand by their side.
- 2 . The Palestinian resistance organizations and the Palestinian Liberation Organization acquired their

present power of influence on the Palestinian masses and in the pan-Arab and international spheres through their aforementioned stands, their refusal to compromise the Palestinian rights and their struggle to restore these rights .

Had they assumed a contrary stand, they will not, to our mind, retain their present power of influence.

The fact that they have no rivals in the arena of struggle for the rights of the people of Palestine does not deny the existence of these rivals. As a matter of fact, these rivals are many and some of them are strong - perhaps stronger than the resistance organizations in the "arena" of readiness to relinquish this or the other part of the rights of the Palestinian people.

Now, who will represent the people of Palestine?... and how can their opinion be ascertained ?

In our opinion - which is based on purely realistic assessments and not on doctrinal evaluations which they describe as extremist - no party can give agreement to surrendering any portion of the rights of the people of Palestine and remain to be a true and strong representative of this people and capable of holding the reins of affairs. Therefore, we can see no realistic grounds for the call for taking the opinion of the people of Palestine other than the desire of those who advocate the call to secure some ceding of the rights of the people of Palestine and to use

this as a justification for their recognition of the Zionist entity .

This is the aim behind this call, because the opinion of the Palestinian people, who are only demanding their right to their land, is their present opinion which they continued to express over more than a quarter of a century .

If the "opinion" of the people of Palestine is to be taken in a way securing the outcome to be their "approval" to cede part of their land, we expect (pointing no accusing finger) that this shall take place by coercion, in one form or another .

A settlement extracted by coercion can not lead to the so-called " just and durable peace " in the region . Whenever the Palestinians feel, after the "settlement", that they had been oppressed, they would work to remove the injustice - immediately or in future.

All should not forget that the people of Palestine are an Arab people, and that they are not alone in this world . All the Arab nation adopted the Palestinian cause as their own cause and sustained and endured much for this throughout more than a quarter of a century. Bearing this in mind we must expect, before or after the settlement, sooner or later, that the affairs in the area will revert, in essence, to what they had been after 1948 - no matter what new formulas and shapes this reversion will take because of past developments and the outcome of the settlement.

None of the stands taken up by governments or the

agreements signed by them stands a chance of having any realistic and durable effect unless the nation approves of it. Otherwise (and it is only natural that the nation will not agree to relinquishing its historic rights), governments can always be changed and agreements can always be torn. Human history and the history of the region are all evidence to what we say.

To our mind, another aspect merits contemplation and discussion, lengthy though this might prove to be. To draw the curtains over any of the aspects of the situation for any reason can not, in our opinion, lead to the creation of the so-called “just and durable peace” sought by the adherents of the two resolutions of the Security Council and by those who accepted them.

The aspect we have in mind is this: Why did the regimes surrounding the Zionist entity together with all other Arab regimes refuse to recognize the Zionist entity for the past twenty five years with all the onus they had to bear as a result? For what reason now are these regimes expressing readiness to extend such a recognition on the condition that Security Council Resolution No. 242 be implemented?

When the creation of the so-called “state of Israel” was announced, on May 15, 1948, all major powers at the time extended recognition to it as did scores of countries of various political leanings. But the Arab governments

did not only refuse to recognize it but also waged war against it. Though that war did not lead to the elimination of the Zionist entity and the liberation of the occupied Arab territories, all Arab governments stuck to their original stand - refusal to recognize the Zionist entity.

At that time, Arab governments were not entirely free to exercise their full will. Egypt and Iraq were bound by a treaty of subservience to Britain which maintained military bases in both countries. Jordan was a semi-protectorate under Britain. Syria had just achieved independence from French colonialism, which still retained influential remnants in the country. The conditions of the other Arab countries were not, by any measurement, better than those of the countries named; they were rather worse.

Close on the heels of the 1948 War, important changes took place in the region, particularly in Syria and Egypt. New regimes and forces came to power; some of them continued until now, as is the case with Egypt where the regime brought about by the revolution of July 23, 1952 still remains in power. Others have been replaced several times, as had happened in Syria. But the stand from the recognition of the Zionist entity remained unchanged.

Apart from the seriousness of the Arab states in the past and their actual readiness to translate their refusal to recognize the Zionist entity into a fight of liberation against it, this refusal had, quite naturally, never been an act of "verbal nicety" that cost nothing. From the day of its inception, the Zionist entity considered the mere

refusal of the Arabs to extend recognition to it as a "hostile stand" justifying acts of aggression on neighbouring Arab countries and the occupation of fresh land on the pretext of "security" .

Further, not all major powers were happy with the Arab stand that adamantly refused to recognize the Zionist entity. Some of them, particularly the imperialist powers then in control of most of the Arab governments, exerted various pressures to change this stand and to prompt the Arabs to come to terms with the Zionist entity, recognize it and to deal with it. That was the attitude of the UN too.

In the fifties, the Zionist entity committed two aggressions against Egypt - in 1955 and 1956 . The outcome of the second aggression , in which England and France participated, was the occupation of Sinai, which was occupied once again eleven years later, in 1967. In the fifties and sixties, the enemy committed a series of aggressions of varying dimensions against Syria and Jordan. Nevertheless, the official Arab stand on the question of recognition remained unchanged. No external power was ever able to dictate a change on the Arabs.

The price paid for this stand was not confined to suffering Zionist aggressions every now and then . It went beyond that to abnormal expenditure of funds, throughout a quarter of a century, on defence requirements and armament. This has, certainly, had telling effects on the economic conditions of the Arab countries, particularly those adjacent to the Zionist entity.

Today , after the lapse of a quarter of century ... after one of the countries surrounding the Zionist entity (Epypt) had fought four wars in 1948, 1956, 1967 and 1973 , ... after the three wars fought by the second country (Syria) in 1948, 1967 and 1973, ... after the two wars fought by the third country (Jordan) in 1948 and 1967 ... now , after all this time and all these wars, we find the governments of these three countries declaring their readiness to recognize the Zionist entity provided the two resolutions of the Security Council - that of November 1967 and the other of October 1973 - be implemented.

We naturally appreciate the grave consequences of the June, 1967 aggression, and we do realize that many changes and developments have taken place , during the past quarter of century, in the region and in the world at large. We also hail the results yielded by last month's war and realise that the latest resolution of the Security Council is not as ordinary as the previous resolutions, because it was adopted on the joint initiative of the world's two greatest powers that also undertook to work for its implementation. We know all these matters and appreciate their importance . Nevertheless , we can not but put forward the following questions:

1. Is it the opinion of the governments concerned that the former stand was wrong and that it was high time to redress it?
2. Have utterly new factors that are to our disadvantage occurred in the balance of military power between

ourselves and the Zionist entity to make it imperative for us to recognize this entity ?

3. Have the military, economic and other potentials of the Arab states surrounding the Zionist entity and of their supporting Arab states grown less than what they were in the past, thereby compelling the governments of the countries surrounding the Zionist entity to extend recognition to it ?
4. Were international conditions in the past more favorable to us than now so that we are faced with the alternative of either changing our stand or coming into confrontation with the world?
5. Do the two resolutions of the Security Council bring us better gains than those we had in the previous stages ?
6. One more last question. Are those accepting the new stand convinced of its soundness ? ... or do they find themselves forced to assume it, for a reason they will disclose or prefer to keep to themselves?

We can not answer the first question. Nor do we want to discuss it now. The answer is the responsibility, and within the competence, of the parties concerned, namely, the governments that changed their stand. It is up to them to answer it, before the masses of their countries and before the Arab nation.

As regards the rest of the questions, while the above-mentioned parties have a major and basic role to play in providing the answer, the topics involved, in our opinion, are of the kind that can be discussed without prejudice to

the natural rights and mandate of any of the parties concerned. Besides, such a discussion comes under the legitimate search for the truth to which every group or individual is entitled. However, we will endeavour to confine our interpretations within the points about which, in our imagination, there is little, or no, disagreement.

On Question No. 2

From a purely military point of view (irrespective of the balance of power in existence in the early stages of the 1948 War) all indications and all official Arab information kept emphasizing the tilting of the balance in favour of the enemy. It is common knowledge that the policy of "maintaining military equilibrium" in the Middle East area, which was first sponsored by Britain and France to be adopted later by America, meant, in the concept of the imperialist powers supporting the Zionist entity, nothing but making this entity militarily stronger than the Arab countries surrounding it together with those countries that might join in a war against it.

Should anyone argue that we are at a disadvantage from the viewpoint of military power - a view to which we do not subscribe - we shall not examine his opinion now. We shall be satisfied with only saying this now: Very well! But this is a privilege which the enemy has always enjoyed. Moreover, this fact has been known to us all along. Therefore, you add nothing new that dictates a change in our stand towards the enemy.

On Question No. 3

We shall not speak of the conditions and potentials

of the Arab countries surrounding the Zionist entity lest our deliberations provoke disagreements. But we only wish to point out that government officials in both Egypt and Syria have kept categorically affirming that the political, economic, military and social conditions in their respective countries are now better than what they were any time before. As regards Arab conditions in general, particularly the Arab countries that supported those who went to war last month, we wish to make the following observations:

- a - In 1956, Egypt alone fought against all of Israel, France and Britain - no Arab country participated with her in the actual fighting. In 1967, only Egypt, Syria and Jordan waged the war, without any other Arab country taking part in the actual fighting. In the last war, Iraq threw its army in the actual fighting on the side of Syria and Egypt, with Algerian, Moroccan and Libyan forces also taking part in the war. Jordanian and Saudi forces were despatched to the front-line, irrespective of their weight and the reasons behind this. After the cease-fire, Kuwaiti contingents were also sent.
- From a purely military angle - the participation of Arab forces by the side of the armies of the front-line countries - the Arab situation was better than any other time before.
- b - From the political and economic angle, the following advantageous changes took place :

Algeria gained independence in the early sixties and committed all its political and economic capabilities to the side of both Egypt and Syria in the last war. (It should be remembered that the desire to crush the Algerian revolution and to annex Algeria to France was amongst the causes which impelled France to join in the 1956 aggression against Egypt). Lybia, which was an ineffective state in the Arab sphere, and which was saddled with foreign British and American military bases, has rid itself of this burden and sided with Egypt and Syria in the last war. The Arab Gulf countries, which were British protectorates that neither rendered assistance nor fought against the Zionist enemy in the past stages, granted financial aid to Egypt and Syria before and after the last war. So did Saudi Arabia, despite our reservations on this government's role from A to Z. But this is not the time to discuss such a matter. As earlier stated, we are confining ourselves to non-contr-oversial issues.

The Arab support to Egypt and Syria before and during the last war, from both the political and economic angles, was far better than what it was at any time before.

c - Now we come to the role of oil. Although we have a definite opinion on the employment of oil as a weapon in the battle as well as on the oil

measures taken during the last war , we shall stop within the limits agreed upon by the official Arab circles . These circles affirm that the use of oil as a weapon , in the manner it was employed during the last war, was effective - to the advantage of the Arabs . Well and good ! This adds another new advantage .

To sum up, the conditions and attitudes of the Arab states backing the Arab countries warring with the Zionist entity are today far better than what they were at any time before . This fact is admitted by all official Arab circles, notwithstanding our own interpretations. Therefore, we can not help wondering : Why on earth have the governments concerned changed their stands and expressed willingness to recognize the Zionist entity ?

We beg to examine the fourth question after dealing with questions No . 5 and 6 . This is because the discussion of international conditions and their impact on our situation stirs many ramified issues , which we prefer to deal with later on .

Whatever the end might be, the outcome of the “settlement” sought by both Security Council Resolutions Nos. 242 and 383, will not, in our opinion, be better (for the countries surrounding the Zionist entity and for the whole Arab nation) than the status quo ante June 4, 1967. Then the sovereignty over Sinai, the Syrian Golan Heights, the West Bank of River Jordan and Gaza was never disputed . The Zionist entity never dared lay claim to any of them before the international society, though, of course, it harboured designs for occupying as much as it could of the Arab land .

The text of the two resolutions of the Security Council and the trend of the plans, contacts and declarations made after the June 1967 aggression, and even after the October

war, clearly show that matters are heading towards territorial changes at the expense of the lands that were undisputedly under the sovereignty of Egypt, Syria and Jordan on June 4, 1967 . Viewed from this angle only, which we consider grave, the outcome of the implementation of the aforementioned resolutions is worse than the status quo ante June 4, 1967 as far as the countries encircling the Zionist entity and the Arab nation as a whole are concerned .

It might, however, be argued that the implementation of the two Security Councils' resolutions with Soviet-American guarantees will curb further Zionist aggression on Arab countries and that any territorial loss will, therefore, be offset by the rich gains of "durable peace".

We have these observations on such an argument: In our opinion, any structure such as the Zionist entity, which had been imposed on the Arab nation by the force of arms to serve express aims, namely, preventing the achievement of liberation, unity and progress by the Arab nation, can not but be aggressive and expansionist. Once it ceases to be so (which we do not expect) it loses its *raison d'être* together with the need imperialism has for its existence and its aggressive and expansionist nature.

We do not think that the imperialists and the Zionists will consent to any settlement that liquidates all motives for any form of aggression, unless they were forced to do so, which has not been sufficiently secured after the October war .

Accordingly, the achievement of durable peace with the Zionist entity is an impossibility, regardless of the inte-

ntions of the Arab countries surrounding it.

Soviet and American guarantees are undoubtedly effective; but they are of a different nature. The Soviet Union offers guarantees in favour of the Arabs, while the United States offers guarantees in favour of the Zionist entity. In both cases, the effectiveness of these guarantees, from a practical angle, hinges on the nature of alliance between the parties concerned in the Arab region and the two super-powers.

Obviously, the Soviet Union can not practically guarantee "durable peace" in the region to the interest of the Arabs unless it has very close ties (at least) with the governments of the Arab countries adjacent to the Zionist entity and unless these governments request the guarantees .

The question now to be asked is this: Is there any "guarantee" that the settlement, with the course it is now taking, will lead to future relations between the Soviet Union and the countries concerned of the type and standard that enable the Soviet Union to practically underwrite peace? We do not want to predict events and pass a final judgement on this question. A recapitulation of the near past - the so near past - will suffice. A searching glance at what has been unfolding in the region since October 22, 1973 is sufficient to let us know the answer .

We wish to remind of another point of particular importance because the regimes and quarters sponsoring the logic we are now dealing with were in existence, rather in the summit of power, before June 5, 1967. If these regimes and quarters consider the peace yielded by Security Council Res-

olutions Nos. 242 and 383 a major gain compatible with the interests and aspiration of the Arab people, perhaps they will allow us this naive question:

Why didn't they seek this peace before June 5, 1967 ?! Why didn't they ask the Soviet Union and the United States, at the time, to guarantee their boundaries and secure for them a "durable concord" and a "durable peace" with the Zionist entity? Was this in any way difficult or impossible?! And who made it so difficult or so impossible?! Is it the Arab nation that has not, and will not, changed ?! Or, were the two super-powers not disposed to venture taking such a step ?!

We pose the above question for its particular significance because the regimes meant used to emphasize at that stage that they alone were leading the Arab struggle for liberation, when the term liberation meant the liberation of Palestine. At the time they were trumpeting liberation slogans in speeches as well as in songs. As a matter of fact it was one of them (Egypt) that demanded the international forces separating her army from the enemy's to quit their positions .

If the regimes concerned view what they are now doing as a "wisdom ", was it inevitable for the Arab nation to pay such a heavy price, between June 5, 1967 and October 22, 1973, merely to enable her leaders discover this " wisdom" ? Anyway, this is just a question searching for

someone to answer it .

It might be argued that the two resolutions of the Security Council guarantee the rights of the people of Palestine, which, in itself, constitutes "a major advantage" that did not exist in the past. It therefore justifies, indeed offsets, any sacrifices made elsewhere.

It is common knowledge that Security Council Resolution No. 242 does not speak of "the rights of the people of Palestine". It only refers to a "refugee problem". Para B article 12 of the resolution calls for "achieving a just settlement of the refugee problem".

If the envisaged settlement will, in the end, guarantee "the rights of the people of Palestine" in this way, it surely brings about nothing new. As such, the settlement is in no way different from the relative resolution passed by the United Nations on December 11, 1948, which reads :

" Refugees desiring to return to their homes and live in peace with their neighbours should be allowed to do so as early as possible . For those who do not opt for repatriation, compensation should be paid for their properties and for the loss or damage of any of their properties This is to be made good, under principles of international law or in equity, by the governments or authorities responsible"

Perhaps the new resolution is worse than that of 1948 because it does not stipulate the repatriation of the refugees .

Should the matter be different, as we have been told and as our preliminary information shows, the rights of

the people of Palestine, in the light of the arrangements now under way, will be guaranteed in either of two ways : the implementation of King Hussein's plan known as the United Arab Kingdom or the creation of "the state of Palestine" on certain parts of the West Bank of river Jordan, perhaps including Gaza too.

Having already expounded our views on both plans, there seems to be no need for examining them here. But we wish to put one more naive question : If the creation of a Palestinian "country" within the Kingdom of Jordan or the creation of "the State of Palestine" on the West Bank and Gaza means "guaranteeing the rights of the people of Palestine, why didn't the acquiescing Arab governments and Palestinian quarters press for the implementation of either plan before June 5, 1967? Why didn't they do so bearing in mind that the regimes concerned remained unchanged ?

But it might be said that King Hussein would have opposed the idea. Very well ! But, we should only remind that the struggle against King Hussein for the implementation of either plan would have been far easier and less costly than waging two wars against the Zionist entity .

Without pointing an accusing finger to anyone , without belittling the importance of the efforts exerted for working out the two resolutions of the Security Council , without jeopardising the current endeavours for reaching the envisaged "settlement" .. without all this, try as we might, we can hardly discover in the two resolutions and in the "settlement" based on them anything better

than what we had in our hands in the previous stages and before June 5, 1967, when the regimes concerned, which remained unchanged, stood firmly against recognizing the Zionist entity and hoisted the slogan of liberation (sometimes the slogan of popular war of liberation) and thereby gained prestige and support in the Arab region.

On Question No. 6 :

The answer to this question rests exclusively with those who accepted the two resolutions of the Security Council. But we have some observations to make :

- ★ If the parties concerned are fully convinced of their decision, duty and honesty require them to express their grounds quite frankly, to explain their justifications and the benefits expected and to formulate a comprehensive policy regarding this issue.

None of the parties concerned has so far done anything of the sort in a sufficient and convincing manner. Their declarations are still of a generalised nature ranging between the borders of ambiguity and clarity, thereby stirring different and conflicting speculations.

If the present circumstances, with the October war still alive in minds, allow such a "luxury", the approaching "peace conference" will very soon corner all in a situation where it will be inescapable for everybody to talk frankly, directly and unequivocally.

- ★ If, however, those who accepted the decisions

were forced to do so for one reason or the other , again duty and honesty require them to tell the whole truth . The peoples of the countries concerned and the entire Arab nation are fully entitled to know the views of the leaders and the responsible circles who determine their future.

One final word. If those who accepted the resolutions were really compelled to give their consent, the region will never witness what is called "just and durable peace". This is simply because anybody forced to take up any stand will inevitably revoke it, sooner or later. The supposition that those who consented to the resolutions against their own will shall stick to their silence does not deny the inevitable fact that one day there will come someone who will speak out and, perhaps, take action. This is what human history teaches us.

On Question No . 4

Now we come to the fourth question dealing with the impact of international conditions on the conflict, which we preferred to answer **after examining all other questions** for reasons earlier stated.

One of the major historic, though painful, facts of our time is that the Arab rights in Palestine, for rather a long period, had enjoyed the support of only a few and ineffective states, organizations and individuals.

In 1947, the United Nations passed an unjust resolution providing for the partition of Palestine between its rightful people and the Zionists who invaded it under the armed protection of British colonization. Immediately after the announcement of the creation of the Zionist state, "Israel", all major powers recognized it, to be followed by most governments of the world.

Regardless of sound or wrong methods of propaganda, and irrespective of their social systems at the time, for

many years the Arabs found no one to lend an ear to their grievances. No one listened to them, amongst either the imperialists and reaction or amongst the defenders of liberation and socialism, when they labouriously kept expounding the cause of the Palestinians and their legitimate right to their own land. At best, the Palestinian cause was treated as a problem of "refugees" - only evoking sympathy.

A look at the map of the world after 1948 shows this: while all major powers and most governments, together with the most powerful political and information organizations, were siding with the Zionist entity, in one form or another, for this or the other reason, none but a few ineffective states and organizations supported the Arab struggle for the rights of the people of Palestine .

However, that map began to change gradually . The Arab liberation movement began to build momentum . Several Arab countries defeated British and French colonization and gained independence and set forth to play significant roles in the struggle against imperialism . Gradually, the Arabs began to win friends in both Asia and Africa.

In 1955, friendly relations began between the Soviet Union and Egypt and, before long, other progressive Arab countries began cordial relations with the Soviets . The Arabs obtained arms from the Soviet Union after their governments used to beg the imperialist powers for arms in vain. Soviet-Arab friendship grew closer and expanded to cover other various vital spheres. This friendship has now become a basic factor in the Arab region and a major prop

of the Arab liberation movement struggling against imperialism, Zionism and backwardness. Similar relations were also established with all other socialist countries.

Year after year the Arab international prestige improved by virtue of their political liberation and their economic and social progress .

The Arab oil, though still under the control of imperialist monopolies, managed to occupy an important position in international life, thereby adding more importance to the strategic value of the Arab region .

In short, there is no comparison between the international attitude towards the Arabs in the eve of (and during) the October 1973 war and in the former days :

★ The Arabs are no longer that weak and colonized nation of 1948 that found nobody to listen to their grievances and to support their struggle for restoring their occupied land . Over the past quarter of century, the Arab nation achieved remarkable revival and, generally speaking, made important steps on the road to liberation and social and economic progress . It came to possess substantial military, economic and political potentials, which were, perhaps, reflected by the October war .

★ The progressive Arab countries now have a formidable friend in the Soviet Union and the Socialist Countries . By the criteria of world power politics, these friends are a match to the supporters of the Zionist entity - America and the

other imperialist powers .

- ★ Today, scores of countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America are backing the Arabs . The resolutions of the recent Non-aligned States Summit Conference, and the recent breaking of diplomatic relations with the Zionist entity by many African and Latin American states are perhaps a clear expression of the great support rendered to the Arabs by this important international community.
- ★ As to Western Europe, which for so long remained to be the most powerful political, financial and military supporter of the Zionist entity, one can safely say that her attitude towards the Arabs is much better than before, notwithstanding interpretations and analysis of the motives .
- ★ All progressive states and forces, and even certain Western states and quarters, no longer speak of the people of Palestine in terms of a “refugee problem”. Despite their varying formulas and viewpoints, they now talk of a “people’s problem, aspirations and rights”, including “the Palestinians’ right for self-determination”. Compared with the former attitude, this is a major and radical change.

On the other side of the line, the Zionist entity, which used to reap the support of influential governments and organizations the world over, is losing support day after day so much so that it has now cornered itself in a

very difficult situation, if not a strangulating state of isolation .

Zionism is no longer that babied movement of both the right and left. It has become a movement and an ideology that is being hunted by many of the progressive and bona fide forces of the world (even in the West) that accuse it of Nazism and racism. Countries of the world are now assuming a cautious vigilant attitude towards the Zionist movement and curbing its influence and octopus-like infiltration in sensitive positions in their lands.

The slogan raised by some parties to the Palestinian resistance concerning the creation of a democratic state in Palestine is now winning over increasing appreciation and support throughout the world, even among circles that formerly did not question the "right" of the Jews to found a "Jewish State" in Palestine.

The general sum of the international situation, apart from different criteria and different interpretations, is, evidently, more in favour of the Arabs than at any time before .

If the Arabs could manage to preserve for so long a period, even from a point of principle, their rights in Palestine and to stick to their refusal to recognize the legitimacy of the Zionist entity when they were weak, isolated and unable to explain their cause to the world, what is the "wisdom" in changing this stand and in surrendering their historic rights and the rights of the people of Palestine when they enjoy so wide-spread an international support ?!

Many might object to this question saying : " But , the present world support to the Arabs is the outcome of the consequences of the June 1967 aggression. As such, we can not preserve it unless we confine our demands to the liquidation of the effects of that aggression " .

This is, of course, true. The June aggression and the shouting facts it revealed concerning the aggressive and expansionist political nature of the Zionist entity were instrumental in influencing world public opinion. But this fact has nothing to do with whether or not to recognize the Zionist entity. On the contrary ; the post-June experience bears out what we kept saying regarding the nature and intentions of this entity , and which , unfortunately , had always fallen on deaf ears. The outcome of the June aggression, therefore, corroborates, and does not weaken, our refusal to recognize the invader .

It might also be argued : " The current international support to the Arabs does not go beyond calling upon the Zionist entity to withdraw from the lands it occupied in June, 1967. Even our allies and friends do not agree with us over the demand to destroy the Zionist entity " .

Again this is a fair argument . To it , however , one should add the fact that our allies and friends as well as many fair-minded quarters associate Zionist withdrawal with guaranteeing the rights of the people of Palestine . Therefore if we are really serious about our cause, we must make the most of this support and fight - with valour and honour - as did other peoples until we force the enemy to withdraw from all the Arab lands occupied after June 5,

1967 . We must do so without recognizing a previous aggression as a price for the withdrawal .

When we fight our way to the pre-June 1967 borders, it is quite possible that the United Nations and the super-powers will demand of us to halt our advance and they might even threaten action if we do not comply . Our halting there and then will not entail any retreat , surrender or relinquishing any right . It will be just an inevitable halt . Nobody will then be able to compel us to recognize the Zionist entity , because we shall have restored the status quo ante June 5 , 1967 by struggle and not by settlement . Then we can call upon the world , from a position of strength and victory , to guarantee the rights of the people of Palestine .

From the same positions of strength and victory, we shall demand, and continue to demand, the rights of the people of Palestine making use of international changes, of all our personal capabilities, of the strategic value of our region and of the formidable oil weapon now wield in our hands. In this way, we will be really able to "give and deny". Having attained this, every step we make and every gain we win will bring us nearer to victory over the usurping enemy .

Anyone who ridicules this "imagination" has just to refer to the history of the Zionist movement to learn from it .

When the creation of the Zionist entity was announced on May 15 , 1948 , Ben Gurion refused to delineate any international frontiers for the "Jewish State" despite the

fact that the border was defined by the partition resolution passed by the United Nations. Ben Gurion did so because he did not want to chain himself with any commitment that might prevent future expansion of the Zionist entity. He preferred to suspend this matter pending every favourable opportunity to expand the occupation.

As a matter of fact, the Zionist entity occupied new Arab lands after the Second Armistice. These lands became part of "Israel". Later on more Arab lands were occupied to bring the Zionist entity to the frontiers of June 4, 1967. Even then, the "Jewish state" refused to bind itself with international boundaries and left this question unsettled as it did in 1948.

The international society did nothing for a simple and clear reason: The enemy was intelligent and skillful in phasing its covets, in maneuvering around them, in pushing them forward piece by piece and in making use of both his personal capabilities and international changes and alliances.

On the entrance of the Zionist Knessit (parliament), one reads this slogan: "The state of Israel ... from the Nile to the Euphrates". Since the inception of the Zionist entity, the enemy kept endeavouring to occupy all the land between the two rivers. But, of course, his foreign ministers and official spokesmen never hinted this in the meetings of the United Nations and other international gatherings. Instead, they filled the world with cries about "the security of Israel" and the "aggressive nature of

the Arabs". This used to take place when the leaders of the Zionist entity were making all arrangements for expansion between the Nile and the Euphrates and "indoctrinating" their society accordingly.

On June 5, 1967, the Zionists occupied Sinai, Gaza, the Golan Heights and the Western Bank ; and the international public opinion failed to make them withdraw to their former borders. They remained on this Arab land for nearly six and a half year now. Thereon they built colonies, extracted oil and entertained tourists. They refused to return to their former borders because, as Ben Gurion put it, Israeli frontiers are where the Israeli army can stay.

The Zionists continued to make maximum use of their own strength, their international alliances and the conditions of their enemy. Now, after the October war, after the two greatest powers had resolved to settle the so-called "conflict", the Zionists are clamouring for secure boundaries, which means nothing but more Arab land. Nevertheless, the world continues to lend them attentive ears; and they might get this land if the settlement is made in accordance with its present designs. Can life give a more eloquent lesson?

Had the October war not been interrupted and the armies reached the frontiers of June 4, 1967, and had we then invested the Arab diplomatic skills, now so boisterously displayed in back-stage bargaining, for demanding the rights of the people of Palestine, our position would have been altogether different.

Besides, we are only after our rights. By so doing, we are committing no sin against anybody or against humanity. Anything we do is intended for attaining a just objective, namely, the liberation of our occupied land, the freeing of our region from evil and aggression and the ridding of the world of a dangerous hotbed threatening with tension and war .

The stress laid at this phase by the Arab countries surrounding the Zionist entity on the consequences of the June 1967 aggression, the rights of the people of Palestine and on the aggressive nature and expansionist designs of the Zionist entity is in itself all sound and perfectly realistic . Therefore , we have no objections to it . But this should be within the framework of a strategic , serious and continuous plan of struggle for liberation . It should not at all be within the framework of seeking a “settlement” while the enemy is still occupying the lands of these countries. The outcome of such a “tactical” attitude is that the enemy will certainly acquire, through the settlement , more than what he had before June 5 , 1967 .

In addition , he will also secure (and this is the most dangerous thing) the recognition of the governments concerned of the legitimacy of his occupation of Arab lands , both past and present.

In this case the disposal of the governments concerned will not come under the classification of either “realism” or “tactic” ; it will become something completely different.

Those who object to our view might raise this question: How can we avoid recognizing the Zionist entity

together with recognizing secure boundaries for it, when the international society has inserted a clause providing for this, side by side with the clause providing for the withdrawal, in Security Council Resolution No. 242, which we have already accepted ?

This is our answer : Security Council Resolution No. 242 is neither a fair nor an immortal human document based on the requisites of human legitimacy so that it will be impossible, and also shameful, to demand changing it altogether or changing one of its clauses. This decision had been passed in the shadow of the defeat of Arab governments on June 5, 1967, following a major Zionist military victory. As such, it is an aftermath of an accomplished fact.

A look at the resolution will reveal that it constitutes a breach of international legality, because it provides for territorial gains at the expense of sovereign states with internationally recognized borders and enjoying the membership of the United Nations. The basic fact is a fait accompli, though international bodies stepped in to legalise and find outlets.

Had we liberated the land that the enemy occupied in 1967 through our own struggle, would anyone have asked us to surrender any part of it to furnish our enemy with secure boundaries? We do not think so. Bearing in mind that the UN itself does not officially recognize any frontiers other than those defined by the partition resolution and that the UN passed a resolution calling for the repatriation of the Palestinian refugees to their homes, what wou-

ld be the position of the UN if we reached the frontiers of 1967 by the force of arms and refused to recognize the Zionist entity on the basis of the very resolutions of the UN?

In our opinion, the matter at issue, in essence, is not a question of either international pressure or international organization's resolutions as much as it is a fait accompli. It is a matter that can only be determined by the outcome of the battle between us and the enemy. This is the core of the issue .

We shall deal here with another aspect of the international situation, namely, what came to be known as “the accord between the two super-powers ” and its impact on our cause .

What are the limits of what is termed as the policy of “accord” between the Soviet Union and the United States ?. To what extent does it influence our cause?... Does it really preclude our sustained efforts to liberate our territories occupied since June 5, 1967 and to demand from a position of strength and victory, the fulfilment of the rights of the people of Palestine ?

What is called the policy of “accord” - a nomenclature to which we do not however subscribe - is in effect a promotion of the policy of “peaceful co-existence,” which was first advocated in the early fifties. It is a policy that is based on ruling out war between the two world camps as a means for resolving problems and disputes and on pursuing, instead, enduring negotiations for reaching realistic solutions satisfactory to both parties .

This policy is the inevitable outcome of two main factors: The degree of military might attained by the world's two super-powers makes war between them impossible because it leads to nothing but their simultaneous destruction and the destruction of the entire world. The second factor is that American imperialism had lost any hope for putting the clock back in Eastern Europe, because the socialist regimes in this area have struck deep roots and flourished economically - thereby making it impossible to go back on socialism .

Accordingly, the problems existing between the Soviet Union and the United States and those between their European allies could no longer be solved except through negotiations and understanding. This is because of the aforesaid perils of collision, the drainage caused by continuous tension and because it is both impossible and harmful to leave disputes unsettled.

Stemming from this premise, the two super-powers got moving to solve their direct problems together with those of their European allies. They have, so to speak, tied up, with neither hoping of preempting the other.

In the other areas of the world - vast and many as they are and including, of course, our Arab region - conditions have not crystalized sufficiently for identification, in one form or another, with the two world camps and becoming a part of their global defence systems . Nor did the political , economic and social conditions in these non-committed parts of the world take their final or semi-final shape (of this historic phase) so that there could be no room for

any contest and rivalry for gaining friends and allies amongst them .

The most the policy of "accord" can attain in such areas of the world is to avoid any direct friction between the two super-powers that might lead to a nuclear holocaust and to work for solving, by peaceful means, any festering problems in such places where both powers have friends or allies provided local circumstances permitted and the two super-powers have a real interest in arriving at a peaceful settlement .

These are, essentially, the limits beyond which the policy of "accord" can not go. Outside this, the arena is wide enough for either super-power to win as many gains as it could, using force or any other means .

With the exception of Europe, the initiative and resolution in all parts of the world - which of course include our Arab region - is primarily in the hands of the domestic forces. The role of the two super-powers is only supplementary and auxiliary. In these areas, regimes changed, upheavals erupted and wars broke out without either of the two super-powers being fully able to forestall what was unfolding, regardless of gains and losses. What occurred on June 5, 1967 in the Arab region and in the Indian sub-continent in 1971 bears evidence to this.

When war broke out between India and Pakistan, the United States was unable to intervene directly to protect her ally - Pakistan. As one of the two belligerent parties - India - was capable of resolving the war in its own favour, so it was. The result was the partition of Pakistan and the

birth of a new state, Bangladesh.

When the June 1967 aggression was launched on Egypt and Syria and resulted in the speedy defeat of the Egyptian and Syrian regimes, the Soviet Union could do nothing more other than press for a cease-fire and then at the lines the Zionist forces had reached.

For nearly six and a half years, the Soviet Union did everything in its power, whether by direct contacts with America or through international channels, to prevail upon the Zionists to withdraw, but to no avail. This is because the only quarter that can make the Zionists withdraw is the Arab nation. All that the Soviet Union can do is to support her politically, militarily and financially, which it has actually done .

As far as our region is concerned, what is termed the policy of "accord" can not, in our visualisation, exceed two targets: Avoidance of direct collision between the Soviet Union and America. The second is the prevention by the Soviet Union of the overthrow of the Egyptian and Syrian regimes by a Zionist invasion, provided they hold out sufficiently in the face of attack, as well as the prevention by the United States of the overthrow of the Zionist entity by an Arab invasion, provided it holds out sufficiently. Apart from this, a free zone for the local forces to do all they can, with each of the two super-powers assisting its own friend and ally without disturbing the policy of "accord" and without triggering off a third world war !

An examination of the strategy of both parties, the

Arabs and the Zionists, will reveal that this strategy does not conflict with the established boundaries of the policy of "accord". It is rather within the free zone allowed by this policy.

Because of their current capabilities and their calculations of the international situation, the present Arab policy is not to eradicate the Zionist entity with a crushing military blow. On the other side, the Zionists can not at all occupy Egypt and Syria now; and their short-term target, until October 6, 1973, was to consolidate their position in the territories they occupied in June 1967, because they need a long time to subject and make this land a real part of their invading entity .

Given ability and determination, either party can, therefore, score - through force or diplomacy - as many points as it could against its adversary without contacting the charged wires of the policy of " accord " . This is precisely what the Zionist enemy, depending on full knowledge of the international realities, has done, without any hesitation, on June 5, 1967 . The policy of accord was not then disturbed and no third war was sparkled off . Exactly the same thing was done by us on October 6, and with a good measure of success in the beginning when we scored important points on the enemy . But the

regimes stopped short of the limits of their power and the limits permitted by the policy of " accord " .

Those who differ with this opinion might argue: "As our Soviet allies are concerned for their accord with America, and as they favour peaceful means and disagree with our view on the liquidation of the Zionist enemy, will they agree to our continuation of the fighting and maintain their aid to us, particularly when signs of a peaceful settlement began to loom on October 22 ? "

At the outset, we wish to emphasize that we do not speak on behalf of the Soviet Union . They are indeed our friends and allies . But they are abler than anyone else to furnish answers to questions pertaining to them .

But we can tackle such issues on the basis of our own information, interpretations and envisionment . This is our right, particularly so, because the matter under discussion relates to our most crucial issue .

In the beginning, it is essential to know who first asked for the cease-fire in the October war. Was it the Soviet Union or the Arab governments adjacent to the Zionist entity ? Our information says that it was the concerned Arabs that asked for the cease-fire. Should this be wrong, we hope that someone will correct it. Though this point is essential, we shall only record it, without building on

it. This is because we believe that it is possible to arrive at the right conclusions by means of an objective scrutiny of relative matters .

When Egypt and Syria suffered a military defeat in the June, 1967 war, the Soviet Union hastened to re-arm the Egyptian and Syrian armies. During the war of attrition, the Soviet Union escalated military assistance to both countries, constructed missile bases and sent thousands of advisers to Egypt. Soviet airmen were defending Egypt's internal air space (1) . When the Egyptian government asked the Soviet Union to withdraw its military advisers, the latter did so immediately. And when the Egyptian and Syrian governments went to war on October 6, 1973, the Soviet Union stood by their side and maintained two military supply routes to them , one by air and the other by sea .

Can anyone prove to us that all this military aid , which was maintained throughout six years, was so meticulously calculated to enable the Arabs to fight for only 16 or 18 days ?

Any political or military analyst, who calculates the Arab military capabilities available on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts, will discover no significant shortage in arms, ammunition or equipment that leads him to ded-

1. This information was supplied by official Arab sources - Ed.

uct that the Soviet Union did not approve of a protracted war or was procrastinating in the supply of military assistance with the aim of pressing towards a speedy settlement .

In our visualisation, the Soviet Union could not possibly have discontinued military aid to the Arabs if the Arab governments had opted to continue to fight to the end - the end in this context means the international frontiers of Egypt, Syria and Jordan . Here are the reasons for this :

1. From a legal point of view, Egypt and Syria were fighting an occupying enemy . No international body could prevent them from doing so on the basis of international legality. If the Soviet Union were to withhold assistance from them in their efforts to liberate their occupied territories (which we imagine is impossible), it would have certainly lost all its international prestige as a power shoring up the forces of liberation, in addition to forfeiting all the credit it has built in the Arab region over two decades .
2. Approaching the matter from an angle of purely factual calculations, and taking into consideration the volume of military and material aid which

the Soviet Union has been rendering to Egypt and Syria over nearly six and a half years (from June 1967 to October 6, 1973) and during the last war, is it logical to assume that the Soviet Union could have discontinued rendering aid at a time when its aid began to bear fruit ? Is it logical to assume that the Soviet Union could have risked the loss of all it had given before for the sake of giving no more aid ?

3. It is true that the Soviet Union is determined to avoid a direct collision with the United States. But this should not imply that the Soviet Union is concerned for the promotion of American interests and influence and those of the allies of America. On the contrary; the Soviet Union has a definite and direct interest in weakening America and its allies, politically, militarily and economically anywhere in the world, and to the greatest possible extent.

In the conflict between the Arabs, who are the Soviet Union's friends, and the Zionists, who are American's tools in the Arab region, the Soviet Union has a definite interest in inflicting the maximum possible defeat on the Zionist entity. The Soviet Union is quite aware that the Zionist ent-

ity is but a military base for the defense of American interests and influence in the Arab region and that any weakening of this entity is an automatic weakening of American interests and influence, which is definitely to the advantage of the Soviet Union .

Further plain common sense shows that successful continuation by the Arabs of the war against the Zionist entity in no way conflicts with the strategic interests of the Soviet Union .

The only point that clashes with the attitude and the strategic policy of the Soviet Union is going beyond the frontiers of June 1967 and attacking the Zionist entity proper. This is because the Soviet Union does not firstly believe in such a course and secondly because it is rightly convinced that to strike at the Zionist entity proper at this juncture shall invite direct American intervention with the possibility of a collision between the two super-powers, which the Soviet Union, again rightly, does not want .

In order to verify the authenticity of the allegations laying the blame on the Soviet Union for the negative aspects of the struggle between us and the Zionist enemy, as Arabs, we do well to call back to memory former claims saying that the Soviet Union was behind the state of "no peace no war" as well as previous talk about the so-called

offensive and defensive arms ... To judge those allegations, we should also remember how the October war has shown proof that the decision on war and peace rests with the Arabs and not with the Soviet Union and that the arms in the hands of the Arab armies are fit to be used for both attack or defence depending on the choice of Arab leaders.

In short, the decision on the duration and dimensions of the battle between us and the Zionist entity has always rested exclusively with the Arabs and not the Soviet Union, and shall always remain to be so in future. Practical experience has conclusively proved that the decision to go to war is an Arab and not a Soviet choice.

In disagreement with this view of ours, the following argument might be made :

“But, the continuation of the fighting, which means exposing the Zionist entity to a sure defeat , is a matter that can not be tolerated by America, whether or not we reached the June 5, 1967 frontiers. America will inevitably throw her weight behind “Israel” - which she actually did. We have no means for such a confrontation with America. We can not venture it unless the Soviet Union is genuinely prepared to do exactly what America does. Otherwise, it is only wise to stop at where we have got and ask, through peaceful means, for the realization of an acceptable settlement that was not possible prior to October 6, 1973”.

Before discussing the attitude of the Soviet Union , we have to deal first with the stand of the Arab regimes towards this issue. We have to ask: Are the Arab regimes concerned willing to strengthen the intensity of their fight against America as a retaliation to America’s escalation of her support to the Zionist entity ? Secondly, are they capable

of doing so or not ? Once we have furnished answers to these questions, we can justifiably address ourselves to discussing the Soviet attitude. This is because it is neither fair nor logical to ignore the parties directly concerned and concentrate on the attitudes of their friends.

Concerning the stand of America and its relationship with the Zionist enemy, there are two schools of thought or camps (call them what you may) in the Arab homeland. They contradict one another and their impact goes beyond this issue to affect many questions of essential importance in Arab politics.

The first camp holds that each of America and "Israel" has its own interests. But these might concur or conflict. Accordingly, America can align herself with "Israel" wholly or partially, or may not do so at all. This camp bases itself on a number of grounds including, in the forefront, Zionist influence on the government machinery of America .

The second camp (while ignoring neither the characteristics and interests peculiar to the Zionist movement and its entity in the occupied Arab territories nor the secondary contradictions that might arise between both the Zionist movement with its entity and America nor also the extraordinary influence which Zionism exercises on the ruling circles in the United States) holds that the Zionist movement and its entity are inseparably connected with imperialism. And as America is the leader of world imperialism, it follows that America and the Zionist entity must be organically connected. Furthermore, as America has

imperialist interests in the Arab region, it certainly needs someone to stand guard on these interests. The Zionist entity has been created, in the first place, to protect these interests. Without it, America will be short of a deterring force that prevents the liberation, unity and progress of the Arab nation and the concomitant sure liquidation of American interests and influence in this region which enjoys supreme strategic importance. As such, America can not but align itself absolutely with "Israel". The forms and degree of this alignment constitute a different matter that should be judged according to the obtaining circumstances.

As the views of these two camps are different and rather basically conflicting, their exponents have also different and rather conflicting ways of approaching the issue of American-Zionist relations.

The first camp itself is divided into two factions. One maintains that the way to break American-Zionist relations is the close Arab "cooperation" with America so that the latter may "see for itself" that its genuine interests lay with the Arabs and not with the Zionists! Holders of this opinion have exerted lengthy efforts but to no avail, as America did not break her relations with Zionism !! The other faction holds that America has gone too far in backing "Israel" since June, 1967 - indeed far enough to cause considerable embarrassment to them. Accordingly, it has become necessary to exert various forms of pressure on America while maintaining dialogue and cooperation with it in the hope of lessening its assistance to "Israel"

or neutralizing it or, perhaps, winning it over to the side of the Arabs. (By the way, the two factions unified in readiness to the October war) .

The second camp maintains that Arab struggle for full freedom, unity and progress must be directed against all forms of imperialism (including, in the forefront, American imperialism) and against the Zionist enemy. Although the struggle against imperialism and the Zionist enemy may take different forms dictated by the obtaining circumstances , they argue , the fact remains that America and "Israel" stand in the hostile camp and that there is no valid reason to draw a separating line between them .

Wishing to accuse or offend nobody, we should like to point out that the Arab regimes directly concerned with conducting the struggle against the enemy since the June 1967 defeat belong to the first camp .

Therefore, the main point is not the "accord" between the Soviet Union and America , but , rather the "accord" between the Arab regimes in question and America !

Should anyone imagine that we have exaggerated by saying that a state of "accord" exists between these regimes and America, no one can deny that these regimes have actually been seeking such an accord . Perhaps a survey of the Arab policy from the June, 1967 defeat to the Rogers Plan and on to the last cease-fire and its aftermath will bear this out in a manner that leaves no room for any doubt.

This being so , what ought to be discussed is not the Soviet preparedness to generate an escalation countering

the American reaction to the continuation of the war, but rather the preparedness of the Arab regimes to do so themselves. After all, the cause is entirely theirs.

America's support to "Israel" is not something novel. It was quite expected that America will throw all its military, economic and political weight to prevent the defeat of "Israel" because this is tantamount to the defeat of America itself. Those who designed the war ought to have taken this fact into consideration, specially so because they have admitted it on several occasions before the war. No one can agree with them that the escalation of American aid to "Israel" was a "surprise". Therefore, they ought to have drawn the necessary Arab plans for countering any American escalation. Have they done so, or even permitted others to do it ?

The American escalation of her siding with the enemy was actual "war" against the Arabs; and when America launches an "actual" war against the Arabs logic expects them to retaliate. Was the attitude of the Arab regimes in question towards America a result of helplessness to confront it or was it a result of a pre-conceived desire and determination to conclude an "accord" with it?

It is axiomatic that the Arabs can not make traditional "war" with America. But the Arabs can, if they so desire, fight against America in other ways:

First : they can do so through fighting Israel, which is, basically, an American outpost in our region. As such, war against it is indirect war against America.

Secondly: America has very vital interests in our reg-

ion, namely, the oil interests, which are directly under our disposal and vulnerable . By striking at these interests, we can inflict on America as much harm as that inflicted by attacking her cities with missiles. This is no exaggeration; it is a solid fact, which is quite known to America, though perhaps unknown to some Arabs .

If the Vietnamese - a people by far smaller than the Arab nation - had managed to fight America, first directly and later indirectly, for many years armed with only will-power, conventional weapons and support from the socialist countries , it follows that the Arabs could do the same thing because they enjoy all the things the Vietnamese had plus a mighty weapon, namely, the oil weapon, which (if they resolved to use it seriously and efficiently) could be of a grave and comprehensive impact not only on America but also on the entire Western World .

A leading figure in one of the concerned Arab regimes stated that America entered the war on its eleventh day and pointed out that he did not want to fight America .

Supposing , for the sake of argument , that America did join the war on its eleventh day, and discarding the query regarding what the Arab governments would have done if America went to war by the side of "Israel" on October 6 , 7 or 8 , one can not but ask : Was the Arab military power incapable of coping up with that level of American intervention for not more than seven days ? Should this be the rule, one might well wonder: Bearing in mind that America had sent better than half a million of its troops to fight them and dropped on them bombs more than

ten times the power of the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the end of the second world war, on what day of their war were the Vietnamese to cease fighting ?

However, information available to us says that the Arab military power, on both fronts, was in good condition on the day of the cease-fire. Not even the enemy could claim that the Arab armies were incapable of withstanding and continuing the war.

Another question in this respect is this : Did we use the other weapon - oil - in the way that makes us really able to fight America or that prevents America from fighting us ?

Much talk is now in the air about the use of this weapon, and Arab newspapers are dramatizing at large scale the roles played by the oil "heroes". But, what really happened in this front?

On October 7, 1973 Iraq decided to nationalize the American shares in the Basrah Petroleum Company. The decision was of a purely political nature, and aimed at opening the oil front in the battle against the enemy.

Iraq called upon the Arab countries to follow suit and hit American interests in the region. Should they not desire to do so immediately, Iraq invited them to impose an outright embargo on oil shipments to the United States and any other states backing the enemy and to couple this step with a clear-cut ultimatum threatening that they would nationalize the oil interests of America and those states if they continued to support the enemy.

In our opinion, that was the only effective warning to America . This imperialist power supports "Israel " only for the preservation of the strategic interests of America in the area . Once America is threatened with the loss of these strategic interests, it will face only two alternatives: either discontinue support to "Israel" or occupy the oil sources . The second option faces America with three risks : The first is the destruction of these sources, which is not difficult in times of war . The second is a direct confrontation with the Soviet Union and all the forces of peace and liberation the world over. The third is the overthrow and crushing of all American agents in the region.

In our judgment, hitting American interests is the only fruitful way to prevent it from escalating its support to the enemy...and to fight it . The oil weapon is at our service and we are capable of using it well .

But have the Arab regimes used this weapon in a manner leading to prevent (or to warn) America from escalating its aid to the enemy ?

Following the Iraqi nationalization of American shares in the Basrah Petroleum Company, President al-Bakr sent envoys to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the Arab Gulf states to appeal to them to take drastic oil measures in support of the war efforts. King Faisal's reply to President al-Bakr's envoy was plain: "Do not talk about this question. I can not think of thrusting oil into politics", he said.

That was in the first week of the battle . Later, the government of Kuwait called for a meeting of Arab oil ministers to determine a pan-Arab policy on how to use

oil as a weapon in the battle . On October 16, the Egyptian government, in a note addressed to oil-producing Arab states, suggested an initial cut of 15 and 10 per cent in oil supplies to America and other states respectively with the provision that such cuts would be doubled in the months to follow if the countries involved persisted in their support to "Israel".

However, the Kuwaiti conference, convened on October 17, decided a general cut down of five per cent - without taking any decision exclusive to America. But, in the face of the derision and condemnation with which Arab public opinion met this decision, various Arab states set forth taking individual decisions in regard to further oil cuts and to stopping oil shipments to America.

Saudi Arabia, the biggest Arab oil exporter, was the last to stop oil flow to America. Its decision came on October 20, that is, two weeks from the outbreak of the war and two days ahead of the cease-fire. It is common knowledge that Saudi Arabia is closely associated with the quarters that decided the war, handled it and ceased the fighting .

Such decisions do have some effect on America, but definitely not that crucial effect that can represent a very hard pressure or that can deter American aggressiveness.

The area most affected by the cutback is Western Europe. As a matter of fact some West European countries continue to suffer from the Arab measures, which are not all accurate and to the point. Accordingly the continua-

tion of some of these measures will yield results harmful to the Arab cause in Western Europe.

From the above, it can be seen that the Arab governments responsible for handling the struggle against the enemy were not, from the beginning, desirous of exerting a strong and effective pressure on America, let alone going to war with it .

It was indeed the advocates of exerting moderate pressure on America who prosecuted the war and who brought it to an end on October 22. Thereupon, all a chorus, they raced in an attractive way to display "goodwill" to America in a manner not anticipated by either extremely pessimistic or optimistic persons .

Why then should we hold the Soviet Union and its policy of "accord" responsible for the continuation and escalation of the battle? We need to be frank and fair-minded. Let us confess that what brought the war to an end at the point where it ended was not the Soviet-American accord but rather the "accord" between the Arab countries that directed the struggle and America. This is the truth... and the tragedy!!

The abovementioned, in our opinion, are the logical answers to the six questions posed by us .

We see no credible justification for the declaration by the Arab regimes that conducted the struggle against the enemy of their readiness to recognize the Zionist entity. Neither their internal or external conditions nor the volume of Arab assistance or the international situation warrant this or make it imperative.

Nor do we find in the acceptance of the two resolutions

of the Security Council anything that realizes the legitimate aims of either the countries in question or the Arab nation as a whole. The two resolutions, in our opinion, can not provide the so-called "Just and durable peace" either.

Some people might, perhaps, think that our persistence and stress on the issue of the recognition of the Zionist entity does under-estimate the importance of many other persistent and crucial aspects of the present situation and the struggle against the enemy, and does so only in favour of a matter which, to them, is nothing but an "abstract right" or a "purely legal" affair .

As a matter of fact, we never shut our eyes to the importance of other aspects. They were indeed of the core of our deliberations. But, we have concentrated on the issue of recognition for two reasons: Firstly, because we do not want to deal at length with matters that might stir disagreement, preferring to allow deeds and results express themselves. Secondly, because the question of whether or not to recognize the Zionist entity is to us, the Arabs, a matter of supreme importance directly affecting a great many other basic issues.

Extending recognition to the Zionist entity is a clear relinquishing of the rights of the people of Palestine and the right of the Arab nation to its land ; it is also a condonation of a criminal usurpation which is without a parallel in human history. This is true regardless of the area of the usurped land .

Lively nations aspiring to freedom and progress and to having a respected position among free nations never relinquish their legitimate rights. They keep sticking to them and struggling for defending them in order to secure the right to live with honour among the human family . What we say is neither sentimental words nor a romantic stance. It is a reflection of one of the basic realities and laws of human life in all history, past and present. Nations , however powerful, rich and advanced, and however spacious in area, do not cede any bit of their land—not even a bit of an arid barren desert. This is the law of nature.

And Palestine was neither an arid land nor a barren desert. It was teeming with people and throbbing with life when the

Zionists invaded it (under cover of the bayonets of British colonizers) and founded , by the force of arms and intimidation, their entity on a part of it after terrorising most Palestinians outside their land. Those who remained at home were degraded to third-class citizens, exposed to all various forms of persecution and racial discrimination.

It is indeed painful to see such criminal acts committed in the 20th century, which came to be known as the century of freedom and progress, without provoking condemnation and resistance. It is indeed a pity that this has been condoned and passed in silence by a unique motley consensus (by the reactionary, the progressive, the imperialistic and by partisans of freedom alike) and covered up by the untenable and absurd excuse of solving the problem of the Jews whom the Europeans have persecuted. Thus, it was considered an act of justice to require the Arabs to bear the sin of the persecution of the Jews by the Europeans and to pay for that persecution from their own land and from their right to live on it in freedom and peace.

All that happened at a time when the world was displaying complete understanding of such problems as those of the African peoples in South Africa and Rhodesia and persisting in condemning and opposing the policies of the white minorities which usurped those two countries and exercise an established policy of persecution and segregation against the indigenous population. We really don't know how the world, particularly the progressive public opinion, will find an outlet of this shouting contradiction that marks its stand towards cases that are similar in

essence though perhaps different in forms. Compared to other similar cases, the people of Palestine suffered more cruelty and oppression because they were driven out of their land by terror and the force of arms.

However, if the world has so far failed to assume a fair and coherent attitude towards this human issue, it should not follow that the people directly concerned should yield to an unjust and inhuman accomplished fact. On the contrary; they should strongly hold on to their right, bravely fight for it and persistently expound it to the world for winning friends and supporters, strenuous and protracted as this process might prove to be.

Their recognition of the Zionist entity, which entails admitting the legitimacy of the Zionist occupation of their land and expulsion of their brothers—the Palestinians—deprives the Arabs of one of the essential pre-requisites for the preservation of any people's freedom, dignity and progress; and this throws the doors wide open for more usurpation of their rights, more humiliation to their dignity and more aggression on their freedom. And so many are the aggressors who are hunting this opportunity!!

The recognition or otherwise of the Zionist entity is not merely a question of right and legality; it is also a question that bears directly on the present and future of the Arab nation and on its very struggle for freedom, unity and progress.

A recapitulation of the realities of Arab life, particularly in the past quarter of the century, shows that the Zionist invasion, in the glaring aggression it represented, has

always been a factor that generated strong resentment and agitation against imperialism that backed this invasion and against Arab reaction which, in obsequiousness to imperialism, colluded with the invaders and gave in to them.

This is, of course, in addition to the other factors of resentment and provocation represented in the presence of both the interests of imperialism and the policies of the reactionary classes.

In the wake of the Zionist usurpation of Palestine, the Arab struggle acquired many a new powerful impetus and justifications that contributed substantially to the weakening of imperialist influence and to the liquidation of a great many of its former footholds and to the expulsion of Arab reaction from many of their strongholds in spite of all their hypocritical policies that pretended to be harmonious with the stand of the Arab masses who resolved to defy the Zionist entity and fight against it.

Whatever the differences of the Arab progressive forces on the national aspect of the Palestinian issue - an aspect that does not enjoy an equal assessment of all these forces - no objective analyst can afford to neglect the impact of this issue, which has always represented a strong impetus and an additional force in the struggle against imperialism, on the Arab general struggle for liberation.

The history of the Arab liberation movement tells us that only a limited number of battles of liberation had managed to win universal Arab support. These included, for instance, the Algerian war of liberation and the confrontation with the "tripartite aggression" on Egypt in

1956.

The struggle against the Zionist entity has always been assured of the sweeping support of the masses and of an unprecedented popular enthusiasm throughout the length and breadth of the Arab homeland. In every confrontation with the Zionist enemy, there poured in the arena huge forces representing a gigantic asset for the struggle for liberation not only against Zionism but also against imperialism and reaction. This is because every battle with the Zionist enemy has increasingly exposed the close association between Zionism and imperialism as well as the shameful collusion between local reaction and imperialism.

Perhaps the full and genuine support enjoyed by the Palestinian Resistance Movement throughout the Arab region, together with the great readiness to fight and sacrifice expressed by the Arab masses from the Atlantic Ocean to the Arab Gulf during the October last war, bear sufficient evidence to what we say.

The struggle for the liberation of Palestine has never been a "national" fight in the narrow and traditional sense of the word. Rather, it has always been, and shall always remain to be, a struggle with full-fledged pan-Arab dimensions and with a progressive substance directed simultaneously against world imperialism and local reaction.

In the circumstances, the recognition of the Zionist entity constitutes not only a humiliating ceding of a natural and legitimate right of the Arab nation but also a counter operation impeding the Arab struggle against

imperialism and reaction and an act of divesting this struggle of a basic impetus that kept feeding it throughout a quarter of a century .

While the intensification of the struggle against the Zionist entity has always been coupled with an effective escalation of anti-imperialist struggle and the isolation of reaction from the Arab political scene, the freezing of this struggle has always led to just the contrary results - to the advantage of imperialism and Arab forces of reaction and rightism. Invaluable lessons in this respect were dispensed by the experiences of Arab struggle from June 1967 to October 1973 .

Following the June 1967 aggression, the influence of American imperialism in the Arab region ran into an unprecedented wave of intense resentment. This created fertile soil for the promotion of revolutionary and progressive struggle which extended far and wide. It also helped in effecting many changes in several Arab countries. The most important of these changes was the triumph of the revolution in Iraq and the building of a revolutionary, progressive and democratic regime in this country.

During the war of attrition in 1970, the Arab anti-imperialist struggle intensified , the role of the reactionary and rightist Arab forces relatively diminished and the progressive Arab forces, particularly the Palestinian Resistance Movement, secured strong positions .

But the Arab liberation movement suffered a difficult impasse to be followed by strong blows after the Egyptian

regime decided to cease-fire upon an American pledge (known as the Rogers Plan) to endeavour for a settlement for the Middle East crisis .

At the time, the Egyptian decision aroused extensive disagreements, even among progressive Arab forces . But results hastened to affirm, along the period ending with the October war, that the ceasing of direct and hot struggle against the Zionist enemy has only led to continuous and dangerous escalation of trends hostile to both the Arab liberation movement and the Arab-Soviet friendship, to a matching escalation of pro-imperialist reactionary and rightist trends and to the intensification of the conspiratorial role played by Arab reaction, particularly Saudi reaction.

The October war served as an exquisite example.

Shortly before the war, while Arab reaction, and the rightist forces colluding with American imperialism or aspiring to an "accord" with it, were having the arena entirely under their disposal, the forces of liberation and progress were sustaining all sorts of defamation, isolation and blows .

Immediately upon the outbreak of the war (for causes and motives to be discussed later) the forces of liberation and progress broke out of the siege laid on them and dashed into the arena-the arena of struggle, sacrifice and honour, where there was no role to be played by the reactionary forces that act in collusion with America

Throughout the days of the war, the Arab forces of liberation and progress kept advancing while the forces

of reaction, who had machinated to direct events in favour of their own covets and suspect inclinations, found themselves in a suffocating isolation. They were to be seen gasping behind events here and there trying to find a place for themselves by sometimes claiming the employment of oil as a weapon and other times by sending token military units to the front .

During the war, Arab-Soviet friendship soared to new heights, while America found itself exposed to manifestations of scathing anger and bitter resentment.

But, no sooner was the cease-fire observed and acceptance made, in principle, to negotiate with the enemy and to recognize it together with its secure borders, than reactionary and rightist forces coveting an "accord" with America returned to dominate the political stage again to push through their same old designs.

The revolutionary and progressive forces suffered attempts for isolation, accusation and preemptive blows.

Talk and statements on Arab-Soviet friendship disappeared from the political scene and, instead, a stampede took place for joining hands with America which virtually became the "hero" of the settlement and its "Grand Mufti" - supreme expounder of Muslim law .

This last - but not solitary - experience should, perhaps, convince a lot of those who failed to understand that the achievement of a "settlement" in this sensitive and unique part of the world can not but be of a rightist and a pro-imperialist substance and that the only beneficiaries will be the

forces of reaction and rightism and American imperialism - and never the Arab and international forces of liberation and progress.

This is what past experiences have shown. It is also shown by the events now unfolding in the Arab scene when the enemy remains in occupation of the Arab land captured in the June 1967 war and in the last aggression.

What will the situation be if the settlement was signed and the Arab regimes recognized the Zionist entity ?

Any objective analyst will inevitably deduct from all the above facts that the Arab regimes in question will rush, in a vigorous and extraordinary manner, to throw themselves into the arms of Arab reaction and rightism and the arms of American imperialism .

The settlement, with the eventual recognition of the Zionist entity, is neither a subject of brain-work nor is it a matter that can tolerate a double-face. Meanwhile, it is not only a question of right and legality but also a question that is organically connected with the Arab struggle against imperialism and reaction.

If these Arab regimes are seeking an "accord" with America while they are still in a state of war with the Zionist enemy and when their cities are bombarded and their soldiers are killed by American weapons, what will the situation be when the war comes to an end and they recognize "Israel" and receive tremendous Saudi aid and American loans?!

In the name of right and legality, we denounce and warn against the recognition of the Zionist entity. In the interest of the Arab struggle for liberation and progress, we denounce and warn against such a recognition .

No one wishes to overburden the Arab regimes adjacent to the Zionist entity with more than they can really afford to bear. But the criteria of patriotism, Arab solidarity and the objective realities obtaining in the Arab and international situation shall always remain as an irreducible and inignorable minimum standard. Without these inescapable creteria, the question can not be finally resolved within the framework of what is bearable and what is unbearable or within the framework of the legitimate search for the truth.

But it appears that these regimes are trying, in every conceivable way, to dim such criteria together with all proofs and objective facts while making a strangely fast dash towards the target they set for themselves and that is feasible in their opinion, namely, the "settlement" target.

Irrespective of our own views on this "settlement", this important question is unavoidable: Is the "settlement" aspired to, and so dearly paid for, attainable? If so, how? and when ?

After more than six years of what came to be termed as the "political action" and after numerous and complicated attempts in the course of which so much face was lost, it has become clear that "Israel" is not prepared to withdraw from one foot of the Arab land it occupied in June 1967, unless it is forced to do so. Likewise, it has also become clear that America, on whom Arab regimes pinned bright hopes for making "Israel" withdraw, is also not prepared for anything of this sort, unless something happened in the region impelling it to do so willy-nilly.

Both the American and the Zionist parties were contented with the occupation as it is, and trying to use it for attaining their objectives and ulterior designs in the region.

Despite the concord and harmony between the fundamentals of the imperialist and Zionist policies and interests, it was clear that America and "Israel" did not see eye to eye in respect to the question of occupation; nor were the objectives, each party wanted the occupation to serve, identical.

America considered the Zionist occupation a trump card employable in its efforts to re-arrange things, in both the regimes adjacent to the Zionist entity and the entire region, in a manner accommodating to its strategic interests and to its designs for controlling the Arab region. To the Zionists, the occupation was an end in itself in that it expanded the area under their control, thus bringing them nearer to their strategic dream of occupying the entire area between the Nile and the Euphrates. This is, of course, in addition to the militarily strategic advantages the occupat-

ion secured to them in their struggle against the Arabs.

Had America been happy with the conditions in the regimes part of whose land is under Zionist occupation and in the Arab region as a whole, it would have hastened to find a sort of "settlement" to the so-called Middle East crisis, particularly as these regimes have been importunately pressing for a settlement and offering to go to great lengths for it .

Despite the many changes effected both inside these regimes and the entire Arab region through the machinations of imperialism, reaction and rightism, America still felt far from being fully assured of the situation in the Middle East. This is because there still existed in the regimes in question a heritage, social forces, slogans and policies about which America felt ill at ease and whose liquidation it has kept demanding. Further, there exist in the Arab region revolutionary hotbeds, headed by Iraq, that cause much anxiety to America and threaten all American machinations with exposure and collapse.

For all these reasons, America did not get moving as speedily and seriously as the regimes in question have hoped in the light of the pledges given to them by their reactionary allies and a good many councillor of the same clay.

Nor was it possible to await further more. Nearly six and a half years had elapsed since the Zionist aggression and occupation of 1967. During this period, the regimes in question kept dithering in the face of the masses' wondering, serious anxiety and flaming anger that threatened with the gravest perils. So critical and dangerous became the

dilemma that these regimes could risk no further delay. Even Arab reaction, which has exerted every effort for more patience in the hope of further changes advantageous to them and to imperialism, came to realise that the situation has become so dangerous that it threatened them with losing control .

So critical was the impasse! An immediate outlet has to be found?!

Not long ago, the regimes concerned thought that they had found the required "solution". A close scrutiny of the found "solution" and of the subsequent events that followed in steady succession for a considerable time, might lead one to the conclusion that the solution is, basically, a Saudi idea or plan, which the author managed to sell to the regimes concerned, offering much for its successful passage.

Given the kind of relationship between Saudi Arabia and America, the assumption that America did not somehow have a finger in the "solution" is rather incredible . This should not infer an accusation or throwing doubt on anyone. But one can not avoid piecing things together and observing facts as they stand. Deeper intentions should be left to Allah and the day of judgement.

The solution conjured up by the regimes in question centred on the necessity of "activating" the issue that remained static since the summer of 1970. To produce the desired effects, the contemplated "activation" must be highly resounding in addition to being novel - totally different from all previous attempts. But it must remain what it is: a mere "activation" in essence, in progress and in results.

This "activation" is to be executed by means of launching a large scale but brief battle capable of introducing new circumstances in the scene impelling America to act expeditiously for achieving the long-awaited settlement. At the same time, the parties concerned will have found themselves what they think as a sufficient pretext and justification for venturing the "settlement" and getting out of the suffocating impasse!!

So that this process of "activation" might realise its ends, a number of questions and requirements had to be taken into consideration :

- 1 . As far as their people and the Arab masses are concerned, the matter should be portrayed as a "war of liberation", because these masses neither understand nor prefer the art of "activation" as do the artful politicians. But the matter must be kept within the limits of the surface and never allowed to touch the fundamentals and criteria for a "war of liberation". This is simply because the ultimate goal is merely the winning of popular support for enhancing the positions of those seeking a "settlement".
2. From the military angle, certain preparations should be made so that the military battle could achieve a measure of success ensuring both better positions to be used as a trump card in bargaining the settlement and the prevention of a Zionist retaliation that might lead to a new defeat .

- 3 . The operation demands improving relations with the Soviet Union (following serious set backs in these relations) to make use of the international prestige of this super-power in working out a "settlement" and to secure Soviet weapons after having failed to get these weapons from West European states. But the improvement of relations with the Soviet Union must not reach the extent that arouses the anxiety and anger of America and prevent it from playing its desired role in the settlement .
4. On the pan-Arab level, it is necessary to secure the approval, the satisfaction or the silence of as many Arab governments as possible. Recalcitrants would be made the target of embarrassment, doubt and accusation, so that they might be deprived of any power to hamper the progress of the plan. Arab participation in the plan is necessary for realistic reasons; but it should be so limited and so calculated that it should not constitute in the end a situation tying the hands of those who make the basic decisions leading to the "settlement" .
- 5 . From the Palestinian angle, the resistance movement should be cornered in such a place where it neither appeared as a liberation force nor disappeared totally from the scene. In this way it could be exploited for attaining the settlement without allowing it to be an impediment or a heavy chain

arresting the progress towards the "settlement".

6. Attention should also be given to oil, which should be considered as a "reserve" to be used, in one way or another should the need arise at certain stages, for exerting pressures facilitating the process of the "settlement".

Such was the "solution" and so were its requisites. The artful politicians that engineered it figured that they had invented an ingenious plan ensuring all the pre-requisites for an "activation" at the largest possible scale and in the most possible effective manner. Thus, they thought, success was completely assured.

But such artful politicians, who handle issues of historic importance and crucial effects on nations in such a manner, always forget some fundamental facts when they are under the impression that they are creating something ingenious. Consequently, while trying to come out of one predicament they find themselves automatically slipping into another one. Surely major issues of history and major issues of destiny can not be solved in such a way. They can only be solved by diligent and patient efforts based on frankness and straight-forwardness.

Eluding the artful politicians in question were the following facts and factors :

- 1 . A people given to understand that the battle was one of liberation, but later discovering that it was only an operation of "activation", can hardly be expected to keep still and silent. They will go on inquiring into matters and examining facts,

and when they discover the truth, they will naturally go beyond mere questioning and investigating .

- 2 . Soldiers engaging in battle inevitably face all the perils of fighting, including, of course, martyrdom. This is true whether the planner of the war aimed at liberation or "activation". When the fighting breaks out, soldiers and officers prefer to give their lives for liberation and not for "activation". And when they discover that all their sufferings were intended to serve nothing more than an operation of "activation", they will undoubtedly take up a stand totally different from that calculated by artful planners

- 3 . In any major action, certain results are often anticipated, but, even more often, unanticipated results come by. Sometimes, they are of far more importance and seriousness than the former .

- 4 . While Arab regimes are concerned for face-saving in any settlement, the ruling clique in "Israel" is also determined to save its face before the Israelis. Given the fact that the Zionist structure has based itself on the hypothesis that it is both invincible and ever capable of defeating the Arabs, and as the shattering of this myth is bound to lead to dangerous cracks in the Zionist set-up, it is quite expected that the ruling clique in this entity, unless crushingly beaten, will

commit anything saving them from defeat and enabling them gain more points than the other side in the "settlement" - should a settlement ever materialise .

5 . For all its talk of peace and secure frontiers, the Zionist entity can not agree to have "final frontiers" unless it suffered a complete defeat. This is because delineating its frontiers - in a definite and final shape - conflicts with the essence of the Zionist ideology and claims that stand for building a state covering the area between the Nile and the Euphrates.

More than a quarter of a century old and with all the gains it secured as a result of its June 1967 aggression, the Zionist entity should now be expected to do everything enabling it to secure through the "settlement"-if it ever takes place-fundamental territorial gains and to create a state of fluidity on the frontiers with adjacent countries in anticipation of fresh opportunities for territorial aggrandizement .

From the run of events since October 6, one can see that everything the artful fabricators of the ingenious "solution" did not expect to happen did in fact happen and is indeed having material and moral effects on the situation and on the present and future events which are contrary to what they had planned and fancied .

As the wise poet once said: "Winds do not always blow as desired by the sails" .

The Arab soldier, who had been terribly humiliated in the June war of 1967, when both the political and military leaderships deprived him of any chance to demonstrate his valour and combat skills and to manifest his determination to sacrifice his life for his cause, did not act in the battle on the basis that the war was merely an operation of "activation"-as envisaged and planned by the artful politicians sitting high above. As a matter of fact, he found in the war his historic opportunity to display his originality, competence and bravery and, therefore, he dashed to fight with such a vigour and skill that upset the balance of force and most calculations - including those of the enemies' camp and the camp of the artful planners of the activation themselves.

While now scrambling towards a "settlement", the masterminds of the "activation" can not turn to the Arab soldier and brand him with defeat. They can not do so simply because he has not been defeated and because, before anybody else, he is quite aware of this fact. Nor can they commend him for winning the needed victory,

simply because he equally knows that he has not gained all the victory he and the Arab nation aspired to.

Determinedly in quest of restoring his freedom and dignity, the Arab citizen impatiently awaited his historic opportunity to realise his dreams. When the fighting broke out, those who had no faith in him were astonished by the fact that, instead of cowardly running into shelter when enemy bombers raided cities, he manly rushed to rooftops to proudly watch enemy aeroplanes being downed one after the other. They were also surprised by the fact that he did not grumble about or quarrel over the scarcity of meat, rice or black beans in market-places. On the contrary, he was always willing to give to the battle more than was asked of him.

After the cease-fire, the artful politicians find it impossible to accuse the Arab citizen of failing to contribute to the war efforts, because he has done so without count. Likewise, they dare not say to him: "Here, this is for you, the price of your sacrifices", simply because they have nothing in their hands that invites his satisfaction and reassurance.

We hope that what we shall say about the role of Iraq will not be taken as a sort of grab or boasting. What we shall say is only facts, which both honesty and the right of the Arab nation require us to speak of.

Perhaps we are offending nobody when we state that the artful politicians who designed the "solution" have calculated and expected a different stand and a different role for Iraq and, consequently, anticipated results

totally different from the realities now in existence.

It was common knowledge that Iraq was suffering from two grave problems : strained relations with Iran and the instability of the peaceful and democratic settlement of the Kurdish question . Accordingly, it was imagined that these two grave problems will prevent it from playing any effective role in Arab affairs .

Many parties of the region who are involved in the "solution" under discussion prayed that these problems persist and aggravate. We have many indications and proofs to testify to this .

Furthermore, the parties in question strove hard to corner Iraq in a state of isolation and to blur or distort any plans, proposals or ideas presented by Iraq for prosecuting the national battle. In fact some of these parties were deliberately launching unjust campaigns against Iraq with the object of abusing its words and deeds in order to frustrate it and thus facilitate its alienation from the arena .

All will recall that, barely two weeks before the October war, one of the sisterly Arab states had launched a vituperative campaign of slander and accusations against Iraq at a time when that state had been preparing for war and fully aware of her need for the participation of Iraq on her side!

Many other parties might also have privately prayed that Iraq should not join the battle or, if it did, only insignificantly so that Iraq may not have an influential role or say in determining the destiny of the battle and the region.

Some might have hoped, and endeavoured, that the fast rolling wheel of events might somehow crush the Iraqi regime and relieve the "potentates" of the region and their imperialist masters of this revolutionary hotbed that refuses to submit to imperialist designs or to pass in silence back-stage bargaining and which, instead, kept exposing and opposing such designs and trends and lining strongly and whole-heartedly with the people.

But those who hoped and worked for weakening or isolating Iraq do not know how genuine revolutions react and function and on what force they depend.

Despite all the dangers and problems besetting Iraq, (which the potentates regarded as "isolating" impediments) this country, which is led by a revolution and a revolutionary, national and popular political party, supported by all the nationalist and progressive forces, can always satisfactorily fulfil its obligations. And it can do so without fearing any risks because revolutions grow stronger through discharging their duties, braving difficulties and pushing forward .

The artful engineers of the settlement did everything they could to anger Iraq and isolate it on the assumption that, so provoked, Iraq would stay out of the battle.

The trouble with them is that they do not know that vanguard forces of history do not stem, particularly in crucial moments, from angry moods or a nervous desire for sheer reaction. Rather they conduct themselves out of a sense of historic responsibility knowing fully what they ought to do irrespective of what others think of or do .

Though an extensive and effective participation by Iraq has not been anticipated, and perhaps undesired by some quarters, yet the development of the battle since its first days made this participation a crucial factor. But even this simple fact escaped the authors of the "solution".

Thus, the strongest voice among the Arab regimes opposed to "settlements" has neither been alienated nor suffocated, nor has its corpse been crushed under the rolling wheel as certain quarters have tried and hoped. On the contrary, Iraq emerged from the battle more strong more powerful and more capable of continuing its advance. This is what has taken place in the camp of the people and the revolutionary forces .

In the opposite camp, imperialism and the enemy discovered that the war (despite the calculated limited nature, proportions and aims of the "activation" plan) has turned to be a dangerous and powerful reality threatening them with losing their control of the situation because the Arab soldier, the Arab citizen and the Arab revolutionary forces hurled themselves into the fight with tremendous vigour and might.

On the oil front, the most dangerous front line, the reins no longer remained in the hands of the friends and allies of America who had stubbornly resisted "mixing oil in politics". As a result of Iraqi nationalization of American shares in the Basrah Petroleum Company and because of the rising flames of the battle and the intensifying popular rise demanding the employment of oil as a

weapon in the battle, the friends and allies of America found themselves compelled to compete with one another for assuming "oil stands", which neither themselves nor imperialism had anticipated.

During the days of the war, both the enemy and the imperialist fronts trembled and the whole world realised that it was witnessing a dangerous spectacle. That, in itself, was a great gain to the Arabs and a historic progress for their cause.

But neither imperialism nor Zionism could easily tolerate such a trend even though it was planned to lead to a "settlement" with both of them. Having realised that the situation has reached the brink of explosion, which necessitated heading for a settlement, imperialism and Zionism, as was expected, got moving fast to channel things in the direction they chose. Each, however, had to act within the available scope and within its own capabilities.

The Zionist enemy, failing to win the decisive military victory it pledged at the beginning of the war, found himself in a very bad need for a military victory of a "special nature", though neither comprehensive nor decisive. The enemy needed such a victory for both tactical and strategic reasons:

From the tactical angle, the enemy can ill afford to enter the arena of the "settlement" while being defeated even partially - because this provides the other side with a clear and powerful material and moral advantage. To compensate the loss of a decisive victory, the enemy needed some sort of a tie within the framework of the new situat-

ion. As a matter of fact, the enemy knew all too well that such a tie could not be a real "draw " but rather a new advantage tilting the balance in his favour because he still has the powerful trump card offered by his presence in the territories occupied since 1967 .

The strategic need has to do with the fundamentals of the formation of the Zionist structure and the Zionist ideology, which are both based on the conviction of building an entity that is ever stronger than the Arab nation and ever capable of defeating it in any military encounter. As such, any defeat, albeit partial, will historically shift the enemy from the phase of ascendance maintained throughout a quarter of a century to a phase of decline.

During the war the enemy displayed its determination to attain such a "superficial victory " at whatever cost. Persisting to realise this end in the Syrian front in the first days of the war, the enemy concentrated tremendous fire and nervous efforts with the object of capturing Damascus or bringing about its military downfall. At the time, we wrote that the enemy (fully aware that the occupation of Damascus could give him no crucial military victory if the war dragged into the depth of the Arab land and if all Arab potentialities were mobilised) saw in the occupation of Damascus a "superficial victory" that could be used both for tactical purposes in negotiating the settlement sought by certain Arab regimes and for strategic purposes earlier mentioned.

The overwhelming speed with which the Iraqi forces reached the front and the vitality with which they fought

played a historic role in preventing the enemy from realizing his dream. This is no boasting; it is a fact of life admitted by the enemy before being recognized by friends.

Realizing after days of fighting that the achievement of a "superficial victory" on the Syrian front was impossible, the enemy shifted to the Egyptian front, where it managed a "break-through" to the west bank of the Suez Canal.

It is both sad and painful to allow the enemy attain this objective. But this is not the right time for condemnation or censure. Time will reveal the reality of what had actually taken place and its grave impact on the run of events and on subsequent developments.

In fact, some of this is already in evidence in such a way as none can ignore in spite of all attempts to play them down, which (attempts), to our mind, are neither right nor useful.

With all the goodwill in the world, we can not understand how a political and a military leadership that had thrown so great a military weight in crossing the Suez Canal and destroying the Barlev Line should have omitted to provide the necessary measures making it impossible for the enemy to attain this goal and enabling them to resist him if ever he ventured attaining it.

To deprive the enemy from this achievement is more important from the point of view of the operation of "activation" than that of the war of "liberation". Since the war had been designed to be short in duration and to yield spectacular results, simple military

and political common sense required the preservation, at any cost , of whatever has been won .

The Iraqi political and military leadership, though thousands of miles away from the Egyptian front, became alive, from the first moment, to the gravity of the motives behind the "break-through". On receipt of information concerning enemy attempts to cross the Suez Canal, this leadership persistently called attention to the seriousness of these attempts and recommended that the matter be given a special priority and that every possible effort be exerted to forestall any break-through.

To our knowledge, the Soviet Union had also seriously warned against the dangers of the Zionist attempts to cross the Canal .

America had a different role and different assignments and objectives :

- (✱) Basically, America is not against a settlement, but it wants the kind of settlement that is compatible with its strategic interests and policies in the region .

America knows all too well that the concerned regimes have been soliciting its aid for working out a "settlement" and that they are prepared to make concessions. Therefore, the timing of the zero hour for negotiating a settlement is entirely in her hand.

- (✱) So grave became the situation in the region that America came to have a fundamental stake in moving towards a settlement .

Otherwise the whole region, with all its vital and strategic American interests, will explode in the face of America whether or not the regimes concerned wanted this .

(★) Besides, the Zionist ally of America has achieved the “superficial victory” it had been seeking in the war .

Accordingly, America got moving to stop the explosion and to direct matters the way it wanted .

That America should think and act in terms of serving its own ends and interests is quite natural. What is indeed strange, even under the circumstances of the “settlement” and the battle for “activation”, is that the regimes in question had all at once uncovered all their cards before America. No sooner had America given the green light signalling its move towards the “solution” and the “settlement” than the Arab regimes concerned began to behave as though the “solution” was already safe in the pocket :

A cease-fire was ordered and observed without the least hesitation; the enemy was allowed to make the maximum use of his break-through to the west bank of the Canal; Kissinger was received with a warmth and affection seldom extended to either brother or friend; diplomatic relations with Washington were restored in an incredible haste and at a time when the slogan calling for boycotting America and hitting its interests in the region was still strongly and highly hoisted;

the Soviet Union was, to all intents and purposes, kept outside any effective contacts as though its role was already over and its services no longer needed .

This state of affairs was attributed, by certain circles , to the fact that the “settlement” has become “guaranteed”. Then the whole thing became exposed to what it really is. It all boiled down to nothing but a detailed agreement designed to “consolidate the cease-fire” and only “under the auspices and guidance of America”. This agreement is better known as the Kissinger 6-point Plan .

American and “Israeli” propaganda, however, turned the agreement into a serious achievement deserving any meetings and worthy of detonating any crises.

But the basic issue in the eyes of the authors of the “solution”, namely, the liberation of the Arab lands occupied in June 1967, has just disappeared from the stage to sink deep into obscurity. The whole controversy is now centred on: where were our lines and where were yours on October 22 !!

Kissinger flew off the region to attend to his other affairs without any thing notable having been achieved along the path of the settlement. A statement ascribed to him by “al-Ahram” newspaper of Cairo to the effect that America needed from six months to one year to be able to start something reasonable might give a clue to the American-Zionist plan based on: postponement, procrastination and dragging the regimes involved into

a wilderness of labyrinthine details.

America acquired most of what it was after - rather more than what it expected and dreamed of. The enemy acquired the "superficial victory" he sought in the war. But the Arab regimes concerned turn their hands inside and outside to find nothing but emptiness.

It might be useful to remind of what we had already said to Arab brothers in the course of bilateral and pan-Arab meetings, particularly in the sessions of the Collective Arab Defence Council. In all these meetings, we have always said to them: granting that you can not go beyond the short-term target (which you define as "the liberation of the territories occupied in June 1967) common sense dictates that the attainment of a short term target required setting a strategic aim and getting prepared for it in every conceivable way. In case the short-term target is set as a ceiling of ambition and preparations, the outcome will fall short of the appointed target. This is precisely what has happened. Regardless of disagreements over details, the war of "activation" and the mentality of "activation" can not give more than what is now in hand.

Now, what are the chances of the "settlement" under the present circumstances?

The war of “activation” has indeed attained its target of stirring the conflict. This is all clear and tangible. But “activation” is not an end in itself; it is rather a means for the “settlement” so much cherished and sought by certain Arab regimes.

A settlement, after all, is not a specific ready-made object served on request. It is a highly complicated and tangled process whose final accomplishment depends on a wide range of factors, such as the domestic circumstances prevailing in each of the two camps, the balance of power between them and the objective factors obtaining in the region and in the world at large. Besides, the logic of “settlements” demands mutual concessions on each side.

As things now stand, there are undoubtedly some factors that are in favour of the “settlement”. But there are more adversary factors that make it very difficult, if not impossible. We shall deal here with the latter and leave it to the advocates of the settlement to defend the favourable factors:

The way the regimes concerned prepared for the last

war and the nature of the targets they set for it, the way they directed the actual fighting, the way they agreed to cease-fire and the way they behaved themselves thereafter all combined to bring the military conditions to some sort of a "draw".

Yet the war has undoubtedly created new facts and conditions of supreme importance in favour of the Arabs. But these new realities can play their full role only in time of fighting. To our mind, the long continuation of the cease-fire together with the procrastination, haggling and the stray over a mass of details that are concomitants of bargaining a settlement do gradually weaken the influence of the positive factors created by the war and do send conditions reeling back to the pre-war status quo. Should there remain any difference between the old and new conditions, this change can not be as strong and dynamic as it had been during the height of the battles.

Therefore, the balance of force that has noticeably shifted in favour of the Arabs during the war is now tilting against them because of the cease-fire. This deprives the regimes concerned of the position of strength they had hoped to acquire by means of the war of "activation" in order to make use of in the arena of the "settlement".

Further, the "break-through" to the west bank of the Suez Canal by the enemy a short while before the cease-fire and allowing the enemy to make full use of it later on has also contributed to give the enemy an upper hand. Therefore, rather than an immediate embarkation (based on positive factors created by the war) on how to make the

enemy withdraw from the territories occupied in 1967, energy, nerves and time are now being wasted in wrangling over the lines of October 22, 1973 and the consequences of the last war.

However some people might try to under-estimate the negative impact of transferring the talks from the "basic" issue in the eyes of the concerned Arab regimes - the liberation of the land occupied in 1967 - to the outcome of the last war, one can not ignore the fact this state of affairs adversely affects the positions of the negotiating Arab regimes and enhances those of the enemy.

2. Following the cease-fire, the military side of the struggle for a settlement practically came to a stand still leaving the other important side - oil - alone in the arena .

It is common knowledge that the reins of oil are not in the hands of the regimes adjacent to the Zionist enemy and holding the reins of military action but in the hands of other regimes that are mostly friends of America, if we choose not to describe them as American satellites.

It is very useful in this respect to draw attention to the fact that the regimes adjacent to the Zionist entity, by their overt and obvious attitudes towards Iraq in general and particularly towards the role of Iraq in the field of oil, and by their deliberate ignorance of the Libyan role this time, are but betraying a desire to keep the destiny of the oil weapon entirely in the hands of the Saudi regime.

The logical sequel of such an arrangement is that the friends of America, headed by the Saudi regime, will

have the upper hand for swaying the run of events towards a settlement compatible with their own interests and views. Naturally this is directly related to the Arab liberation movement and to the conditions of the Arab regimes bordering the Zionist entity.

Consequently, these regimes will have to face not only the fact that their power to bargain a settlement with the enemy and America is no longer strong and effective but also the fact that a fundamental part of their power is no longer in their own hands but in the hands of reactionary regimes that are friends of America.

Further, Saudi Arabia and other "oil" regimes friendly to America, having taken the steering wheel into their own hands, will capitalize this historic opportunity by assuming superficially "stiffer" stances than those of the Egyptian and Syrian regimes, which are both counted on the Arab liberation movement. This means the shifting of the moral "weight" in the Arab region from these two regimes to the Saudi and other similar regimes.

If we contemplate the details of Kissinger's recent visit to the region, particularly the statement ascribed to him by "al-Ahram" newspaper of Cairo regarding his apprehensions about the "inflexibility" of King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, we will see that the general trend is for portraying the Egyptian regime as "flexible" and projecting the Saudi regime as "inflexible". Obviously, this Saudi "inflexibility" is but a manoeuvre; it is rather a reactionary-American plot designed to boost the camp of reaction at the expense of the camp of liberation to which

the Egyptian and Syrian regimes are supposed to belong .

The conclusion to be inferred from all this is that the awaited settlement can be feasible only if it is more compatible to the plans and visions of reactionary regimes friendly to America than to the plans and aspirations of those directly affected by the settlement .

In our opinion, it is not going to be easy for the regimes counted for so long on the Arab liberation movement and owing their prestige, rather their very existence, to this affiliation to accept such a settlement. This is going to be very difficult even if desired by supreme leaderships.

3. Setting aside the established fact that the Zionist entity is expansionist by nature (which means that the enemy will, to the last minute, cling to as much as possible of the territories he occupied in 1967), and viewing the matter from the angle of those arguing with the enemy on the so-called "Israeli security" in the hope of "convincing" him that his security lay only in coming to peace with his neighbours, we can see nothing indicating that the Zionists have bought this theory which some Arab and foreign "sages" have been trying to sell over to them.

The Zionists remain adamant on their belief that their "security" can be achieved only by retaining all the occupied Arab territories, or strategic parts of them, and not by any international guarantees.

For all the scars which the war inflicted on the Zionist entity - scars which wear off gradually by reason of the cease-fire, the policies of the Arab regimes and other allied factors as referred to above - the new situat-

ion yielded no results that are capable of forcing the enemy to change his theories and policies in a way leading to his full withdrawal from the lands occupied in 1967.

The expected outcome of this state of affairs and of the logic of any "settlement" is that the two parties - the Arabs and the enemy - will have to make sufficient concessions in order to reach a settlement acceptable to both of them.

To the enemy, such concessions mean withdrawal from territories he occupied in 1967 and which are all under Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian sovereignty; to the countries surrounding the Zionist entity such concessions mean relinquishing some of their national territories to the enemy.

Now, how can we draw the map of the apparent concessions in the light of the obtaining conditions and available information?

In the past few years, the enemy has displayed a measure of "flexibility" regarding his withdrawal from Sinai. Needless to say that his concept of "flexibility" is withdrawal from one part or another of Sinai and clinging to the rest—which might be large or small.

Since it is clear that the line they are following is not heading towards forcing the enemy to effect full withdrawal, the regimes involved will inevitably face the problem of relinquishing to the enemy parts of the sovereign territories of Egypt. Can they do so?

An even more serious problem is encountered in the Syrian plateau. Until now, the enemy showed no "flexib-

ility" - even as a lip service - regarding his withdrawal from this important and strategic plateau. Even if we suppose that he will be pressurized to display a degree of "flexibility" it is expected that his response will not exceed a partition of the plateau with the Syrian government after placing part of it under some form of international control. Translated into plain words, this means relinquishing to the enemy part of Syrian national territory whether through internationalization or partition. Can any one concede this?

The situation in the West Bank of River Jordan is also different. If the settlement is to be achieved at the hands of King Hussein, and if he makes concessions (which he is all too willing to do generously), he will have to face the Palestinian and the Jordanian peoples together.

Should there be anyone contemplating achieving the settlement at the hands of a certain Palestinian party, this party will have to face the problem of ceding that part of Palestine occupied before June 1967 plus some parts of the land occupied in 1967 — which are neither insignificant nor small as some imagine. We wonder, who can do this ?

It might be presumed that what we think as impossible might just happen. Then we do not know how it will be possible for the involved regimes to face their peoples and armies in their own countries, let alone the Arab nation, to convince them that they (the regimes) have accomplished a task qualifying them to stay and to lead. How?.. and at what price? We do not know and we can not say

whether they know or not.

4. The regimes attach great hopes on the possibility that America will exert pressure on the enemy to make him withdraw from the lands he occupied in 1967. Granting, for the sake of argument, that America is all that serious in this respect, still a volte-face on America's part can hardly be expected. After more than six years of acquiescence to the perpetuation of Zionist occupation of "all" Arab territories, it is hardly practical to expect America to make an about-face and consent to the opposite, namely advocating or pressurising for Zionist withdrawal from "all" occupied Arab lands.

Apart from differing assessments and interpretations, any change in the American stand can not be as drastic as hoped for by the regimes. From this it follows that the regimes, in addition to the concessions they had already made and all they have done to please America, can not escape the problem of surrendering to the enemy certain parts of Egyptian and Syrian sovereign territories as well as territories of the Western Bank of River Jordan.

Besides, America's shift to a new stand, though limited as earlier mentioned, can not be without a "price". Surely she won't do so for fondness of the black eyes of the regimes. This is not the place to discuss such a "price" as this is well known in the world of politics, especially when the reins have shifted from the hands of the "flexible" directly concerned parties to the hands of the "inflexible" Saudi monarch... and owner of the "Great Bank" !

In reply to any one believing that America will endeavour to restore to the Arabs all their occupied lands, one can not help wondering: "How costly will that price be? And can any of the regimes directly involved afford to pay it?"

Another point that makes the situation more complicated relates to the conditions of the present American Administration. Although we are under no illusions concerning the relationship between America and Zionism, yet we can not possibly overlook the hard fact that the Nixon Administration is by no means strong enough to cope with the Zionist pressure, even if it really wanted and attempted to face this challenge. Whatever the outcome, the Zionist pressure will, to some extent, adversely affect the ability of America to exert on the Zionist enemy the pressure these Arab regimes seek and dream of .

These are the main features of the situation at present and in the near future . Most of them indicate that the "settlement" promises to be very difficult and very complicated, if not virtually impossible in the midst of the natural contradiction and the manifold struggle involving all the elements of the entire situation.

The problem facing the artful politicians who are steering the affairs of the region is two-sided :

Firstly, whatever their own views about it, the "settlement" lacks the approval of their own people, their own armies and the Arab nation as a whole .

Secondly, contrary to what they imagined, or were

made to imagine, the "settlement" is far from ready or assured; in fact it is nearer to the impossible than the feasible.

Now, whereto are those who drove events on their present course heading? Whereto are they trying to drag the region? What is the "wisdom" that attracted some parties to scramble behind them in their aimless fading in the wilderness?

Certain persons are now busy bracing themselves up for roles to play in the "settlement" arena. But they had better find out first whether the scenario is ready and the stage is set .

Whatever the regimes and those treading in their footsteps might try to do and say, the fact remains that what came to pass between October 6-22 or 6-24, 1973, has given the Arab nation - its masses and revolutionary forces - the sufficient power, determination and confidence to steadily continue the march of liberation, unity, dignity and progress. Surely the future is theirs .

FORWARDS EVER...

The End

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